

DARLING, CHARLES B., D. 1864.
Charles B. Darling correspondence, 1861-1864

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Darling, Charles B., d. 1864.
Title: Charles B. Darling correspondence, 1861-1864
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 390
Extent: 1 microfilm reel (MF)
Abstract: Microfilm copy of the papers of Charles B. Darling, a union soldier in Company D, 130th New York Infantry Regiment during the Civil War.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access

Unrestricted access.

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Source

Loaned for microfilming, 1962.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Charles B. Darling correspondence, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Processed by BS, March 1962.

Collection Description

Biographical Note

Charles B. Darling was a Union soldier from Warsaw, Wyoming County, New York. He served as a private and sergeant (became commissary sergeant September 1863) in Company D, 130th

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New York Infantry Regiment, January 1862-October 1864. The 130th New York Regiment was organized in Portage, New York in September 1862. The regiment went to Suffolk, Virginia a few days after its organization and remained in this area until May 1863. Subsequently, it went to Franklin, Virginia and to the Virginia Peninsula. In September, it went to Shenandoah Valley to serve with Philip Henry Sheridan. The designation of regiment was changed on August 11, 1863 to 19th New York Cavalry, and on September 10, 1863 to 1st New York Dragoons. Charles B. Darling died of disease at Camp Russell, Winchester, Virginia on December 14, 1864. His father, J.M. Darling, who after February 1863 held a position in Washington, D. C. in the Internal Revenue Department, went to Winchester to return his body to Warsaw.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of a microfilm copy of the papers of Charles B. Darling from 1861-1864. The majority of the collection is letters from Charles B. Darling to his family. His letters are concerned with all phases of army life: recruiting; war news and rumors; marches; travel by train; campsites; the surrounding countryside; the Southern whites, about whom he expresses opinions from dislike to admiration and sympathy; the Negroes whom he dislikes, although he is opposed to the institution of slavery; camp life, which he seems to like in spite of all hardships and monotony; food; sleeping quarters; officers; rumors of homefront traitors; his comrades; chaplains, whom he describes as "mostly poor drunken scamps"; Rebel soldiers, officers and men; the destruction of Southern homes and farms; his admiration for President Abraham Lincoln; and his confidence in General Ulysses Grant.

The collection also includes three letters from his father, J.M. Darling; two to his wife and one to Charles.

Arrangement Note

Letters organized by writer, then arranged in chronological order.

Container List

Letters of Charles Darling

Box	Folder	Content
MF1	1	1861 September 29: To sister Jenny who has moved away. Written from Warsaw before his enlistment. Concerned with his work as a clerk at the bank, the county fair, and recruiting of soldiers.
MF1	2	1861 November 24: To Jenny. Family news. Talks of Northern victories which are inspiring confidence "that the war will soon close in triumph for our cause."
MF1	3	1862 January 9: To father. His colonel has promised the boys they would see battle soon with a large force of rebels threatening Suffolk. Pay is overdue.
MF1	4	1862 January 21: To mother. Says he is enjoying the best of health and spirits, and has gained 20 pounds since leaving home.
MF1	5	1862 May 26: To father. Requests five dollars from his bank account as pay has not come yet, and they have to pay a high price for their needs. Writes often of his friend Homer.
MF1	6	1862 September 10: To parents. From Washington, D.C., where they have come from Camp Suffolk. They have made camp in sight of the Capitol. They are going farther south that day to serve in the guarding of the city.
MF1	7	1862 September 14: To parents. Describes trip south to Camp Thorpe, Suffolk, Virginia, where he is now stationed, on an old condemned steamer. Rations for one day and two nights a little coffee and seven or eight hard crackers. Says people there are bitter against Unionists and elated by the success of Stonewall Jackson. Says he is in good health, not homesick, and the hardest part is carrying fifty pounds of gear.
MF1	8	1862 September 30: To parents. From Suffolk. They now have about 20,000 troops stationed there. Says the negroes are jubilant over the emancipation act. Twelve rebel prisoners were brought in by scouts.
MF1	9	1862 October 1: To father. Was glad to get a batch of mail. Is getting along better now with the negroes, who do their washing, mending, and sell them pies and cakes when food is short in supply. Speaks of the desolation the war is making of the South. Bothered by mosquitoes as they are only about two miles from the Great Dismal Swamp.
MF1	10	1862 October 1: To sister Nellie. From Suffolk. Describes country, "no manufactories of any kind and the stores are small concerns and poorly stocked." Says they get some luxuries such as ice cream and sweet potatoes.
MF1	11	1862 October 2: To father. Wants father to send him dollars worth of stamps.
MF1	12	1862 October 8: To father. Describes a visit to Norfolk with his friend Homer. Says inhabitants of the city "both white and negro are bitterly opposed to the union." As they walked by homes, the "ladies rush in and slam their doors after them." "We could also hear at most every house the little ones singing disunion song." They have 30,000 troops in camp now and more coming in, and he

- hopes this means they will join forces with another army and make a trial on Richmond.
- MF1 13 1862 October 24: To father. Wants him to send him a bundle, including five lbs of "best loose chewing" tobacco.
- MF1 14 1862 November 2: Describes a hard march of thirty three miles in twenty hours. For breakfast they stopped at two houses and made the lady of the house cook something.
- MF1 15 1862 November 12: To father. Was glad to get bundle from home, with "fried cakes & ginger snaps...The mittens were a good fit." In good health and gaining weight. They are building log huts with fireplaces for winter quarters. Some in the company are dangerously sick, but the "boys from Warsaw stand it well."
- MF1 16 1862 December 23: To father. Still at Suffolk. Wants a bundle sent with some coffee, paper envelopes, and some pegged boots, as his boots have given out. Says they are doing their own cooking, and managing very well.
- MF1 17 1862 December 2: To father. Says he wishes he could have spent Thanksgiving at home but would have wanted to come back to camp next day. Wants some things sent from home, stamps, shoe brush, blacking, two silk handkerchiefs, etc. Always insists father pay for these supplies from his bank account. Still has received no pay. His regiment took 21 prisoners.
- MF1 18 1862 December 14: To father. From Suffolk still, but regiment has moved 1 1/2 miles from first camp, to come under a new brigade, Colonel Alfred Gibbs in charge. Charles has received the office of Regimental Clerk, relieves him from drilling and marching.
- MF1 19 1862 December 16: To father. An affectionate letter. Not much news.
- MF1 20 1862 December 21: To father. A despondent note. States that General Ambrose Burnside's defeat and retreat at Fredericksburg.
- MF1 21 1862 December 24: To father. Describes Christmas dinner he will cook tomorrow with two friends which included two chickens, sweet potatoes, coffee, butter, and biscuits. In good spirits. Likes new camping ground.
- MF1 22 1862 December: 26: To father. They have marching orders to join the forces in North Carolina under General John Gray Foster.
- MF1 23 1863 January 1: To father. They will be in Suffolk a while longer. Speaks of the hardships of camp more strongly than he has done before. 250 men sick, cold nights, up before light, poor fare. Tells father not to mention these hardships to anyone else.
- MF1 24 1863 January 4: Still no pay, their muster roll alone calls for seventy thousand dollars. Speaks of the losses in their regiment so far "about sixty men by death desertion, discharge, and transfer."
- MF1 25 1863 January 13: To father. Speaks of the monotony of camp life. Men are ready for a battle.
- MF1 26 1863 January 16: To father. Full of enthusiasm as they are expecting a large rebel force in their direction soon.

- MF1 27 1863 January 21: To father. The brigade has a new commander, General Alfred Howe Terry who has seen some fighting.
- MF1 28 1863 January 24: To father. Still from Suffolk. Still in good health, says health of regiment also improved, once averaged a death a day, now only about one a week. Speaks of General AmbroseBurnsides and states if they lose this time it may be all over.
- MF1 29 1863 February 3: To father. The regiment has finally seen action, an artillery battle some distance from camp, 8 killed and 20 wounded.
- MF1 30 1863 February 8: To father. Congratulates him or his new position it Washington, in Internal Revenue Department. The Tribune has said of the above regiment fight that the New York troops behaved badly. He defends them heatedly.
- MF1 31 1863 February 9: To mother in Warsaw. An affectionate letter to cheer her loneliness since father has gone to Washington. Says things have quieted down at camp since the fight.
- MF1 32 1863 February 12: To father in Washington. Asks him to describe his work, and wants to know if he sees much of the President. Camp is quiet.
- MF1 33 1863 February 19: To father. Troops are still because of mud and bad weather.
- MF1 34 1863 February 24: To father in Washington. Says he has not heard from his mother lately, sounds homesick, and tells how much letters are appreciated. Still likes a soldier's life however.
- MF1 35 1863 March 2: To mother. From Suffolk still. An affectionate son-to-mother letter.
- MF1 36 1863 March 4: To sister Jenny. Family news. Says he likes soldiering and hopes they'll have another fight soon.
- MF1 37 1863 March 8: To mother. Still likes camp life, especially being out-of-doors, but says one of the hardships is the lack of women.
- MF1 38 1863 March 10: To father. From Camp Suffolk. Speaks of Colonel Alfred Gibbs, who is strict in his discipline, but is respected by the men.
- MF1 39 1863 March 11: To father. Things are dull in camp, but they have received orders to be in readiness, and thinks this means an attack on Richmond.
- MF1 40 1863 March 11: To mother. Still from Suffolk. Says he is sorry to see there are so many traitors at the North.
- MF1 41 1863 March 15: To father. Troops are moving in, seven or eight regiments during the past week.
- MF1 42 1863 March 23: To father. Says Suffolk is strongly fortified with some eight forts well garrisoned and armed, and a rifle pit running entirely around the town.
- MF1 43 1863 March 25: To mother. Says there are some cowards in camp. Says the worst part of soldiering in Suffolk is the lack of women.
- MF1 44 1863 March 26: To father. Camp life very quiet. Complains of men at home who grumble at paying their taxes and at paying service men's families \$1.25 a week.

- MF1 45 1863 March 30: They have just had orders for each man to be prepared with one day's rations cooked and fifty pounds of cartridges in his box.
- MF1 46 1863 April 7: To mother. Still quiet, hopes fighting will commence soon. Regiment has been paid in full to the first of March, which has helped morale.
- MF1 47 1863 April 8: To father. Says he would like to have his father visit him but would not advise it as the officers are opposed very much to visitors in camp. Says he is glad to hear Union feeling is growing in Washington.
- MF1 48 1863 April 11: To father. Describes his work in the Adjutant's office making out reports. Comments on drunkenness of the chaplains of the various regiments. His own regiment does not have a chaplain, and so many have been applying for the job, that his Colonel has put up a board on the approaches to camp with the inscription "No chaplains needed here." Colonel Gibbs thinks the regiment is better off without a chaplain of this sort, and Charles agrees.
- MF1 49 1863 April 12: To father. They have had two false calls to battle, but no Rebels appeared. Took two prisoners, forced them to tell the number of their troops, about 20,000. Says they are ready for the attack.
- MF1 50 1863 April 13: Boys are jubilantly waiting for an attack. Says he stood it in the office till noon yesterday, then shouldered his gun and went in. No action yet.
- MF1 51 1863 April 17: To father. Colonel ordered him back in the office and he doesn't like it. Says Rebels will try to cut off communication between Norfolk and Suffolk and could try to starve them out, but doesn't think they will be able to carry out their plans.
- MF1 52 1863 April 21: To father. A force from Suffolk went across the river, encountered a large Rebel force, and captured about 150 prisoners. Says he's sorry they are fighting on the wrong side as the officers are fine looking lot of men, and were much more capable than their own officers. Says Rebel Sharpshooters continue to throw bullets into camp.
- MF1 53 1863 April 19: To father. Still awaiting attack. Says they have about 30,000 troops, and thinks the Rebel force about the same.
- MF1 54 1863 April 24: To father. No action yet. Says they are going to send out a large reconnaissance to see whether the rebs have left or not.
- MF1 55 1863 April. 26: To father. Says they heard in the night a rebel band playing across the river. Deserters brought into camp said the band was playing because of the arrival of General Stonewall Jackson with troops.
- MF1 56 1863 May 1: To father. They are busy strengthening the fortifications in and around Suffolk.
- MF1 57 1863 May 4: To father. The enemy has left. A large force of their men attacked the rebel position, they waited through the night for an attack which didn't come, and by morning they were gone. Charles says he thinks this is "the most miserable failure the rebels have made since the commencement of the war," and looks for war's end in six months if General Joseph Hooker is victorious.
- MF1 58 1863 May 5: To mother. Still from Suffolk. Describes enemy's retreat towards Richmond. They are bringing in deserters and stragglers, also they found about

- a hundred wounded men abandoned by the enemy, says they were brought to Suffolk where they will receive kind treatment.
- MF1 59 1863 May 9: To father. Quiet since rebels have retreated. Says their forces are busy destroying houses around Suffolk, probably have burned around fifty.
- MF1 60 1863 May 11: To sister Jenny. Says they are all hoping for General Joseph Hooker's triumph in Richmond. But he hopes the war will not close before the end of slavery, although he does not think much of the negroes.
- MF1 61 1863 May 14: To father. Says he hopes news of General Stonewall Jackson's death is true as his death will be a great loss to the enemy. Says he can now eat any food now, but that if he ever gets a chance at Mother's cooking again, she won't hear much grumbling.
- MF1 62 1863 May 22: To father. Things are dull in camp. Flies are thick. Says he hopes to see the end of slavery, but does not like the negroes and hopes not to see another one after the war.
- MF1 63 1863 May 27: To father. Says he has nothing of interest to write, it is hot and dusty and dull. Soldiers are feeling good over the news from General Ulysses Grant's army.
- MF1 64 1863 June 3: To father. Thanks father for all his letters of encouragement, apologizes for having to ask for seven dollars to buy shirts, which he will give back to father when his pay comes, which is overdue.
- MF1 65 1863 June 8: To father. Thanks him for \$7.00 check.
- MF1 66 1863 June 12: To mother. Complains of dust, two or three feet deep sometimes, and the flies.
- MF1 67 1863 June 13: To father. No particular news.
- MF1 68 1863 June 18: To father. Says guerrilla bands shoot their pickets at night. Says its hard to see women and children turned out of their houses and their houses destroyed, but they are just as bad as the men.
- MF1 69 1863 June 27: To mother. From Whitehouse, Virginia. They left Suffolk a week ago, as a part of about 50,000 troops advancing towards Richmond. They are now about twenty miles from there.
- MF1 70 1863 July 14: To father. From Frederick City, Maryland. They are twenty miles from the front. Talks of the fine countryside and that the people are almost all Union supporters unlike the people of Suffolk.
- MF1 71 1863 August 24: To mother. From Manassas, Virginia. They drill 5 hours a day, says he can now handle a saber very well, Colonel told the Captain that Charles is one of the best drill masters in the company. They haven't gotten their horses yet - they are being changed from infantry to cavalry.
- MF1 72 1863 September 2: To father. From Manassas. They are drilling for the Cavalry service, thinks they will all like it better than the infantry.
- MF1 73 1863 September 16: To father. They went to Alexandria on Sunday and got 650 horses. Charles has been made Commissary Sergeant for the company increasing his pay from thirteen dollars a month to seventeen. His job is to draw and deal out the forage for the Company horses.

- MF1 74 1863 September 27: To father. From Manassas. They are drilling with carbines and on horseback.
- MF1 75 1863 October 9: To mother. From Manassas. Says they would fare poorly on their own rations but food is brought in to camp every day.
- MF1 76 1863 October 28: To father. From camp near Germantown, Virginia. Their regiment had a skirmish with the enemy, lost 3 killed. Have been in the saddle most of the time. Rebs have destroyed the railroads from Manassas to Washington, but they are rebuilding it.
- MF1 77 1863 October 30: To sister Jenny. From camp near Germantown. Describes the part they played in General George Meade's retreat, on the right-flank of the army to protect it on that side. From Manassas to Washington dead men and horses everywhere.
- MF1 78 1863 November 24: To father. From Culpepper, Virginia. Wants father to send him information about the Veterans Corps, as he is thinking of re-enlisting at the war's end.
- MF1 79 1863 December 8: To mother. From Camp 1st New York Dragoons, Culpepper, Virginia. Speaks of the desolation of Virginia's countryside.
- MF1 80 1863 December 8: To father. Camp 1st New York Dragoons, Culpepper, Virginia. Thanks father for sending boots.
- MF1 81 1864 January 28: To father. His morale is good, they have plenty to eat and plenty of work to do. Hopes the President will be reelected.
- MF1 82 1864 February 7: To father. From Mitchell's Station, Virginia. Describes his brigade, all the regiments are regulars except theirs - the Dragoons - are volunteers. They have contempt for each other apparently. Charles says as a general thing the regulars are cowards and that any dangerous work is given to the Dragoons.
- MF1 83 1864 February 22: To sister Jenny. From Mitchell's Station, Virginia. They are in the mountains, picketing along the Rapidan River, in sight of the rebs.
- MF1 84 1864 March 11: To father. From Mitchell's Station. Was glad to hear New York State is considering a bill to amend the state's constitution to permit soldiers to vote.
- MF1 85 1864 March 12: To mother. From Mitchell's Station. Says all is quiet in the Army of the Potomac. They were disappointed that General Hugh Kilpatrick did not enter Richmond. Some of the 1st Dragoon went with General Custer across the Rapidan to draw attention of the enemy while Kilpatrick crossed at another point.
- MF1 86 1864 April 19: To sister Jenny. From Mitchell's Station. Says the toops have great confidence in General Ulysses Grant. Charles hopes the Army of the Potomac will have a chance to fight in the summer campaign.
- MF1 87 1864 May 27: From A.F. Knapp to Mr. J. M. Darling. From Camp Stoneman, Reserve Brigade. Requests a loan of five dollars.
- MF1 88 1864 July 4: Charles to sister Jenny. From City Point, Virginia. Says their regiment has lost 280 killed and wounded since crossing the Rapidan River.

- MF1 89 1864 July 9: To mother. From City Point, Virginia. Mentions the lice which trouble them. Is looking forward to Grant's taking Petersburg and eventually Richmond.
- MF1 90 1864 July 23: To mother. From City Point, Virginia. They are in camp resting, says the Cavalry Corps is once more in splendid condition.
- MF1 91 1864 October 25: To sister Jenny. From Camp Dragoons, Strasburg, Virginia. Is elated over the victory of General Philip Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley. His horse was wounded so he was not in the fight himself.
- MF1 92 Fragments, not dated

Letters of J. M. Darling.

- MF1 93 1864 June: J.M. Darling to his wife, from Washington, D.C. Charles is stationed nearby and he has seen him and praises the Lord for bringing him through the 20 battles he has fought in since May 5, 1863.
- MF1 94 1864 September 25: To Charles. From Washington. Has had news of the achievements of General Philip Sheridan's command. Says the victory in which Charles served has helped in the election of Lincoln.
- MF1 95 1864 December 15: Washington, D.C. To his wife telling her of Charles' death at Camp Russell, Winchester, Virginia, December 14.
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