

# RAY, LAVENDER R.

## Lavender R. Ray papers, 1861-1865

Emory University  
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### Descriptive Summary

**Creator:** Ray, Lavender R.  
**Title:** Lavender R. Ray papers, 1861-1865  
**Call Number:** Manuscript Collection No. 315  
**Extent:** 1 microfilm reel (MF)  
**Abstract:** Microfilm copy of the letters and diary of lawyer, statesman and Confederate soldier Lavender R. Ray of Newnan, Georgia during the Civil War.  
**Language:** Materials entirely in English.

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### Administrative Information

#### Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

#### Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

Reproduction restricted because materials are held by another repository.

#### Source

Loaned for microfilming, 1957.

#### Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Lavender R. Ray papers, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

#### Processing

Processed by MRD, 1957.

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### Collection Description

#### Biographical Note

Lavender R. Ray (December 15, 1842-May 27, 1916) was born in Newnan, Georgia, the son of John R. and Bethenia Gilliam Lavender Ray. His mother, of Virginia ancestry, was born in

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Knoxville, Tennessee. His father, of Scotch-Irish descent, was born in Donegal County, Ireland and immigrated to America in 1812; in 1828 he taught school in Maryland and Virginia and finally settled in Newnan, Coweta County, Georgia, where he maintained a handsome and hospitable home. He was well educated, cultured, a fluent orator and a successful lawyer.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Ray joined the Newnan Guards, was then with the 1st Georgia Cavalry Regiment, and served as ordinance officer in General Alfred Iverson's Division of Cavalry. He was accompanied by a family slave, Dick, and was in various camps in Virginia and Tennessee. This division was afterwards commanded by Major General P. M. B. Young. Lavender served four years and returned to Newnan, studied law in his father's office and was admitted to the bar in 1866. In 1871 he married Miss Annie Felder of Americus, Georgia. He was one of the presidential electors in 1880 and voted for Winfield Scott Hancock. He served as a representative from Coweta County to the state legislature, 1882-1883, and represented his district in the state senate, 1884-1885. In 1891 he and his family moved to Atlanta, where he had large real estate interests.

Ray attended a number of Confederate Reunions as a delegate and in 1906 was one of Wheeler's cavalry especially invited to Washington to act as honorary escort at the funeral of General Joseph Wheeler on January 29 of that year. In 1911, fifty years after leaving to join the army, he and others were presented with a diploma by the University of North Carolina. He continued active law practice until his death from apoplexy on May 27, 1916. He is buried in the family plot in Oak Hill Cemetery, Newnan, Georgia. Biographical information derived from Knight, L. L., *Georgia and Georgians, IV, 1958-1961*.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The collection consists of a microfilm copy of the papers of Lavender Ray from 1861-1865. It contains two items: a manuscript diary with entries from October 6, 1864 to April 30, 1865, and "Letters and Diary of Lavender R. Ray," a bound typed copy of the above diary with some letters dated April 28, 1861-April 17, 1865.

Diary entries begin with the evacuation and burning of Atlanta. Ray discusses camp life, costs, attitudes of civilians, travel to South Carolina, news of Lee's surrender and Lincoln's assassination. Letters document Ray's enlistment and early war years, and news of his body servant, Dick Thompson.

### **Arrangement Note**

Arranged in chronological order.

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## Container List

**Diary**

Box	Folder	Content
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MF1		1864 October 6 - May 6, 1865
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**"Letters and Diary of Lavender R. Ray" [typed copy of above]**

MF1		Diary: 1864 October 6 - May 6, 1865
MF1		1861 April 29: Writes to sister from Chapel Hill wanting to leave school and join army.
MF1		1861 September 6: Monterey, Virginia. Letter to mother.
MF1		1861 September 12 - October 27: Camp Bartow. Describes preparation for battle and unfortunate skirmish with own troops; fortifications of camp; a skirmish (October 3) with Union troops; "losing confidence in Lee" (October 16).
MF1		1861 November 11 - 18: Travelers Repose, N.W. Virginia. Speaks of cold, guard duty, camp stories about the Yankees.
MF1		1861 December 7 - 13: Near Winchester, Virginia. Tells of journey from Greenbrier; describes election of officers; requests things from home; is under command of General Thomas R. (Stonewall) Jackson.
MF1		1861 December 16 - 25: Camp Mason, Virginia. Everyone tries to enjoy Christmas. Writes of weather, rumors, clothing needs, lack of social contacts.
MF1		1862 January 1 - 18: Leaves Camp Mason; describes march, rejoining General Jackson. Battle at Bath, West Virginia, pursuit of Yankees to Potomac, sacking the private homes where the Yankees had been. Did not wish to invade Maryland.
MF1		1862 January 23 - February 23: Winchester, Virginia quartered temporarily in a home; dissatisfied with General Jackson's care of troops, describes feelings. Regiment moved to Knoxville, Tennessee. Lavender will follow.
MF1		1862 March 2: Camp Davis near Lynchburg, Virginia. Regiment unable to get to Knoxville because of roads. Plans to come home soon.
MF1		1862 March 9: Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Visiting at university. Mentions dead, sick, lost friends. Will rejoin regiment in Augusta in 2 days.
MF1		1862 May 26 - 29: Gives particulars of prisoner exchange trip; thinks he is likely to get permanent appointment.
MF1		1862 June 15 - 28: Various camps in East Tennessee; Kingston, Camp Watchout (near Maynardsville), also Camp Precarious in same area. Yankees advancing, he wants commission. Strong Union section.
MF1		1863 February 14: Camp Woodlawn, near Rogersville, Tennessee Describes Girls' School.
MF1		1863 April 4 - 10: Camps near Kingston, Tennessee. About to leave for Kentucky. Might send Dick (family slave and body-servant who went through the war with Lavender. After the war was known as Lick Thompson.)

- MF1 1863 May 8: Camp near Robertsville, Tennessee. Tells of injuries. Needs Dick.
- MF1 1863 May 13 - June 6: Wartburg, Tennessee. Encloses leaves of trees growing in historic spots; tells about the spots; can't get a good office; wants a substitute; Dick has arrived (June 30); describes in detail the murder of Capt. Miller by men of his regiment, the Tigers.
- MF1 1864 January 12 - 17: Camp near Athens, Tennessee. Expecting to return to Kentucky for big fight; small pox has broken out; seems to have given up on getting a substitute.
- MF1 1864 March 23 - June 27: Atlanta, Georgia. Would like to join the Marines; hears the French are coming to help; speaks of marriage mania; advises father to evacuate completely "to the plantation".
- MF1 1864 December 5: Macon, Georgia. Advises father to sell his slaves and buy property. General war news and business advice.
- MF1 1865 January 20 - February 18: Headquarters Iverson's Division, Near Mathew Bluff, South Carolina. News of war; speaks of Negro issue; advice to family. On February 18 in Augusta, preparing to go to attack Yankees at Aiken.
- MF1 1865 March 9 April 17: Augusta, Georgia. Dick is still with him. War news, Yankee stories, conditions of cities, prices; needs money and clothing.
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