



**State of Tennessee  
Department of State  
Tennessee State Library and Archives**

**Arnold Family Papers, 1857-1895**

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**COLLECTION SUMMARY**

**Creator:**

Arnold, William D., b. 1837

**Inclusive Dates:**

1857-1895, bulk 1861-1863

**Scope & Content:**

Nineteenth century documents pertaining to the Arnold family of Hickman County, Tennessee. The majority of the collection is family and business correspondence, highlighted by Civil War letters written by Pvt. William D. Arnold to his wife, Martha.

The earliest documents deal with property owned by Martha Arnold in Christian County, Kentucky. R. S. Boyd corresponded with her about the rent of this property, and its eventual sale for \$850.

In the collection are twelve letters that Pvt. William D. Arnold wrote to his wife Martha in 1861 and 1863 during his service in the Civil War. Arnold mustered in to Co. H, 24<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment, CSA. These letters are mostly filled with assurances that he was doing well, news of the health of other soldiers from home, questions about his wife and children, and advice about managing the farm.

The first letter, dated July 16, 1861, describes Arnold's trip to Camp Anderson, Tennessee, and provided news of other soldiers in his company. There is also a fragment of a letter, apparently from Camp Trousdale, near Nashville, Tennessee. Arnold asked if she had news of her brother, Francis, who had left the camp and "had better come back as soon as he can, if he don't they will send after him." Francis had returned by September 10, 1861, when Arnold wrote Martha that her brother contracted the measles. Later letters reveal that Francis went home to recover and returned to his company.

In his October 19, 1861, letter from Cave City, Kentucky, Arnold reported that there were about “two thousand yankeys well fortified nearby” and there had been a cavalry skirmish near Hopkinsville, Kentucky. He wrote of hearing that “the yankeys is killing the women and children where ever they go that is in favor of the south. They was a boy shot for hollering for Jef davis not far from here a few days ago.” By December 10, 1861, Arnold was in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and wrote of death of his captain, Wesley Beale, and election of Tom Campbell to replace him.

In the final letter from 1861, dated December 26<sup>th</sup>, Arnold wrote to his wife that he had been ill, but was doing better. He requested that she make and send him some “linsy drawers” to replace the ones he had worn out. He also reported that some men in his company, including Martha’s brother Francis, had been vaccinated (for smallpox).

Pvt. Arnold wrote all of the letters in 1863 from “a camp near Shelbyville, Tennessee.” His letter of March 20, 1863, revealed a longing to be free of the army. He asked his wife if he could return home, writing “I have not drawed any money yet . . . if they don’t pay me up I think I shall come home. I would like to have your advice about it if you think I would be any danger at home or not.” He also said that he had heard talk of peace but feared it was too good to be true.

The last letter from Pvt. Arnold in this collection, dated April 18, 1863, indicates that he did not leave at that time, for his wife’s reply had convinced him to stay with the army “as long as they stay in Kentucky or Tennessee.” The collection contains William Arnold’s 1863 Oath of Allegiance to the United States, with a bond of one thousand dollars.

Martha Arnold struggled to provide for her children. An undated document shows that five members of her community “out of charity for suffering humanity” pledged to give her corn, bacon, and coffee because none of her children were old enough to help her earn a living.

The collection also contains six pieces of undated and post-Civil War family correspondence.

**Physical Description/Extent:**

1 microfilm reel; 16mm

**Accession/Record Group Number:**

Mf. 2036

**Language:**

English

**Permanent Location:**

Mf. 2036 (Available only on microfilm)

**Repository:**

Tennessee State Library and Archives, 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37243-0312

**Administrative/Biographical History**

William D. Arnold and Martha Hassell Arnold lived in Hickman County, Tennessee, during the time of the Civil War. William Arnold mustered into the Confederate Army as a private in Co. H, 24<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment, in July 1861. They had four children, Louisa, John, Mary, and Emma. The 1880 census lists Martha as a widow.

While Arnold's regiment fought at Shiloh in April 1862 and participated in Gen. Bragg's invasion of Kentucky in August, the Battle of Perryville in October, and the Battle of Murfreesboro in December, there are no letters from 1862 in this collection.

**Organization/Arrangement of Materials**

The collection is arranged chronologically.

**Conditions of Access and Use****Restrictions on Access:**

None

**Restrictions on Use and Reproduction:**

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## **Index Terms**

### **Personal Names:**

Arnold, Martha Hassell, b. 1830  
Arnold, William D., b. 1837

### **Corporate Names/Organizations/Government Bodies:**

Confederate States of America. Army. Tennessee Infantry Regiment, 24<sup>th</sup>

### **Subjects:**

Soldiers -- Confederate States of America -- Correspondence

### **Geographic Names:**

Tennessee -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Sources  
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Sources

### **Document Types:**

Loyalty oaths  
Personal correspondence  
Receipts (financial records)

## **Acquisition and Appraisal**

### **Provenance and Acquisition:**

The papers were loaned for microfilming on August 30, 2012, during the *Looking Back: The Civil War in Tennessee* digitization project in Centerville, Hickman County, Tennessee.

## **Processing and Administrative Information**

### **Preferred Citation:**

Arnold Family Papers, 1857-1895, Tennessee State Library and Archives

### **Processing Information:**

Prepared for microfilming by Rachel Smith and Genny Carter, January 2013

### **Existence and Location of Originals:**

Privately held

**Electronic Location and Access:**

<http://www.tn.gov/tsla/history/manuscripts/findingaids/mf2036.pdf>

## DETAILED COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

### CONTAINER LIST

Contents/Item Title	Date	Box	Folder
Letter to Martha Rock from R. S. Boyd	February 21, 1857	1	1
Receipt to John I. King from W. D. Arnold	February 25, 1858	1	2
Letter to Martha Arnold from R. S. Boyd	January 31, 1859	1	3
Letter to Martha Arnold from R. S. Boyd	February 17, 1860	1	4
Letter to Martha Arnold from R. S. Boyd	December 14, 1860	1	5
Letter to Martha Arnold from W.D. Arnold	July 16, 1861	1	6
Letter to Martha Arnold from W. D. Arnold	undated	1	7
Letter to Martha Arnold from W. D. Arnold	September 10, 1861	1	8
Letter to Martha Arnold from W. D. Arnold	October 19, 1861	1	9
Letter to Martha Arnold from W. D. Arnold	November 12, 1861	1	10
Letter to Martha Arnold from W. D. Arnold	December 2, 1861	1	11
Letter to Martha Arnold from W. D. Arnold	December 10, 1861	1	12
Letter to Patsy (Martha) Arnold from W. D. Arnold	December 26, 1861	1	13
Letter to Martha Arnold from W.D. Arnold	January 9, 1863	1	14
Letter to Martha Arnold from W.D. Arnold	February 27, 1863	1	15
Letter to Martha Arnold from W.D. Arnold	March 20, 1863	1	16
Letter to Martha Arnold from W.D. Arnold	April 18, 1863	1	17
Oath of Allegiance, W. D. Arnold	1863	1	18
Notice of donations to Martha Arnold	undated	1	19
Letter to Willie B. Mayberry from Emmie Arnel (Emma Arnold)	July 28, 1878	1	20
Letter to Martha Arnold from J.A. Arnold	April 13, 1891	1	21
Letter to "mother" from (Sarah?) Arnold	May 7, 1893	1	22
Letter to "sister and children," unsigned	October 6, 1895	1	23
Letter, unsigned	undated	1	24
Letter, unsigned	undated	1	25
Envelope to Martha Arnold	undated	1	26
Envelope to Martha Arnold	undated	1	27