Redding-Hamilton Civil War Letters Collection, 1855, 1863-1865

repository: Local History Room, Buchanan District Library, Buchanan, MI (http://www.buchananlibrary.org/local-history-room).

finding aid: Composed by Peter Lysy, June 2015; updated August 2015.

extent: 2" (1 box)

biographical sketch: Roxcinda S. “Cinda” Redding, daughter of John and Catherine (Lambert) Redding, was born in Michigan in June 1847 and lived at or near Dayton, Bertrand Township, Berrien County, Michigan. She married Francis Marion "Frank" Hamilton on 22 February 1866 and died in 1931. She is buried in Bakertown Cemetery, Bertrand Township.

Francis Marion "Frank" Hamilton, the son of Nathaniel and Hannah (Stockwell) Hamilton, was born in Michigan on 17 October 1841. A resident of Buchanan, Michigan, he enlisted on 21 March 1863 as a private in the 11th Battery Michigan Light Artillery (also known as Battery L, 1st Regiment Michigan Light Artillery) and served in Kentucky and Tennessee in the 1863 Knoxville Campaign and then on garrison and outpost duty in East Tennessee through 1864 and 1865. He mustered out with his unit at Jackson, Michigan, on 22 August 1865 and returned to Dayton, where he married Roxcinda Redding on 22 February 1866. He worked for years as a laborer before acquiring his own farm. He died on 6 July 1915 and lies buried next to his wife in Bakertown Cemetery.

scope and content: The bulk of this collection consists of 25 letters that Hamilton wrote to Redding while serving in the army. It is clear that Hamilton wrote additional letters as well, but they have not survived. Generally, in his letters Hamilton devotes more time to personal feelings and his relationship with Roxcinda than to details of soldier life. The unit saw little action, and consequently there is little battle content. Still, the letters are revealing of life in a peripheral theatre of war and of a nineteenth century epistolary courtship.

series: 1. Letters from Francis Marion "Frank" Hamilton (11th Battery Michigan Light Artillery) to Roxcinda Redding, 1863-1865

folder: 1/1 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 10 August 1863
folder: 1/2 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 1 October 1863
folder: 1/3 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 29 October 1863, Camp Morris Town, TN
folder: 1/4 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 22 May 1864
folder: 1/5 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 28 May 1864
folder: 1/6 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 28 May 1864
folder: 1/7 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 5 June 1864
folder: 1/8 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 11 June 1864, Cumberland TN-KY-VA
folder: 1/9 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 18 June 1864, Cumberland Gap, TN
folder: 1/10 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 25 June 1864, Cumberland Gap, TN
folder: 1/11 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), __ July 1864, Knoxville, TN
folder: 1/12 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 2 July 1864, Knoxville, TN
folder: 1/13 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 4 July 1864, Knoxville, TN
folder: 1/14 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 31 July 1864
folder: 1/15 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 21 August 1864
folder: 1/16 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 6 September 1864
folder: 1/17 Letter to Roxcinda Redding from Frank Hamilton (11th MI By), 12 September 1864, Knoxville, TN