
Inventory of the James Alvin Bell Papers, 1854-1883

The Huntington Library

San Marino, California

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Descriptive Summary

Title: James Alvin Bell Papers,

Date (inclusive): 1854-1883

Creator: Bell, James Alvin

Extent: c.475 pieces

Repository: The Huntington Library

San Marino, California 91108

Language: English

Provenance

The collection was purchased from G.E. Woodley in July, 1964.

Access

Collection is open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information please go to following [URL](#) .

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Preferred Citation

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Biography

Born c. 1834, James Alvin Bell was a farmer in Kaneville, Illinois until he enlisted in the 8th Illinois Cavalry in May, 1861 where he served until his death at Stanton Army Hospital (Washington, D.C.) in October, 1863. His long engagement to Augusta Anna (Hallock) Elliott, a school teacher in rural New York, is the most prominent matter of this collection.

Scope and Content

There are 135 letters written by James to Augusta during the period 1854-October, 1863, and 141 letters from Augusta to him. The content of their letters is limited to themselves and their limited social sphere. James' war letters provide little description of relevant conditions, but do afford his reactions to the hardships.

Another soldier's letters to Augusta (24 in all) during the 1863-1865 period and 12 others written to her after the death of James portray the tragedy of the war. There are other miscellaneous letters, a few of Augusta and James' poems, seven photographs, and some fragments.

Although the collection is uncatalogued, it is primarily arranged in alphabetical order with chronological sequence. There is a summary report.