

GUESS (GEORGE W.) LETTERS
(Mss. 793)
Inventory

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections
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SUMMARY

Size.	1 volume containing 45 items
Geographic locations.	Dallas, Texas; Harrisonburg, Louisiana; Arkansas
Inclusive dates.	1861-1865
Bulk dates.	N/A
Language.	English
Summary.	Letterbook containing Civil War letters from Colonel George W. Guess to Sarah Horton Cockrell and other items.
Organization.	Arranged chronologically
Restrictions on access.	If microfilm is available, photocopies must be made from microfilm.
Related collections.	N/A
Copyright.	Copyright of the original materials is retained by descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
Citation.	George W. Guess Papers, Mss. 793, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack location(s).	M:19

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

George W. Guess was a colonel in the Dallas Light Artillery Company and later in the 31st Regiment of the Texas Volunteer Cavalry of the Confederate Army. He was acquainted with Sarah Horton Cockrell of Dallas, Texas. In Sept. 1863, Guess was court-martialed for trade with the Federal forces, and in the same month, he was confined as a Confederate prisoner in a Federal prison in New Orleans, Louisiana.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The bound volume contains photocopies of Civil War letters, primarily by George W. Guess, with an introduction by Monroe F. Cockrell, grandson of Sarah Horton Cockrell. Letters (1861-1865) of Guess to Sarah Cockrell from Texas, Missouri, Arkansas, and Louisiana contain information concerning battles, Federal troop movements, terrain, living conditions of the people, the hostile attitude of Louisiana residents toward Texans, the health of his regiment, his superior officers, the mail service, Confederate currency, attitudes towards slaves, and Governor Allen's emancipation proclamation in Louisiana. Letters (1864-1865) from Alexandria and Shreveport concern his court-martial and imprisonment.

The collection includes photocopies of a letter (1864) by Camille Polignac, Brigade General of the Confederate States Army, describing a gunboat fight and fortifications near Trinity. Letters (1864) from Confederate private William Flynn from Harrisonburg, Louisiana; from G. W. Gray in Arkansas; from Mitchell Gray in Atlanta, Georgia; and from A. W. Gray in Dallas, Texas are included along with receipts, pictures of George W. Guess and Sarah Horton Cockrell, and a manuscript copy of the "Obligation taken by the Knights of the Golden Circle," a pacifist organization which sought to end the war through compromise.

LETTER DESCRIPTIONS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Contents</u>
Sept. 10, 1861	From Camp Scott, McDonnell County, Missouri (?), describing the Oak Hill Battle on Wilson's Creek, Aug. 10, and the part played by the Texas Regiment in it. Guess states that he sent a report of this battle to the Tyler paper, and further mentions that they are encamped on the Elk River enjoying good health.
June 26, 1862	From Headquarters, Camp Givey (?), near Paris, Texas, expressing thanks for the coffee sent him, and mentioning the news of the war from Virginia, Arkansas, and Missouri, and General Stonewall Jackson, General Johnson; General McClellan, and Major Malone.
June 29, 1862	From Headquarters, Red River County near Clarksville, mentioning plans to leave for a camp beyond Clarksville, desire to go to Little Rock, and states that he expects to cross the Red River into Arkansas. Guess further mentions General McCulloch, Major Malone, the health of his regiment, the preaching by Reverend McKenzie of Clarksville; news from Richmond; Stonewall Jackson; Shields, Grant and Fremont; the fighting at Chattanooga, and the Yankee forces on the White River in Arkansas.
July 17, 1862	From headquarters, Camp Duncan, Little Rock, Arkansas, describing the forced march there on orders of General Hindman and mentioning the health of the regiment, the mail, and the bounty received by the soldiers from General Henry McCulloch in Bowie County, Texas. Guess mentions the slander of Judge Burford, news concerning the victory in Virginia, the surrender of McClellan to General Johnson, the annihilation of the Army of the Potomac, the departure of General Curtis and General Fitch from Arkansas, and states that he expects to go to Missouri to set her free now that that there are no more federals in Arkansas.
July 29, 1862	From Headquarters, Camp Thompson, Scott County, Arkansas, describing the counties of Yell, Scott, and Franklin as to terrain, people, houses, timber, and water, and mentioning the sickness among the man, the army, doctors, the mail, and orders to go to Van Buren, Fayetteville, Bentonville, and into Missouri. Guess mentions the federals as being in the northwestern part of the state, the capture of Col. Clarkson and 15 of his men, Texas regiments, and reports concerning victory in Virginia, the sinking of 15 gunboats and taking of 5 at Vicksburg, the re-capture of Fort Pillow, Memphis, and Baton Rouge. He describes camp life, the lack of drinking, the popularity of Hawpe, the discipline of Texas regiments in passing through eastern Texas and Arkansas.
Nov. 30, 1862	From Headquarters, Hawpe's Regiment, 2 nd Texas Brigade, Camp Roane, Arkansas, mentioning packages he has received, recent slander, the order to move the regiment 15 or 20 miles to meet the enemy, typhoid fever in the regiment, the failure of the Confederate States to pay the men for their services, and General Hindman. He describes conditions seen on his tour through the brigade as officer of the day.

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Dec. 16, 1863	2 nd Texas Regiment, Camp Roane, Sebastian County, Arkansas, discusses interference with his mail, probably at Dallas, Texas, describes bloody battle which has taken place recently, and mentions cannon fire near Van Buren.
Jan. 17, 1863	From Headquarters, Hawpe's Regiment, Camp on Vache, Grass, Arkansas, mentioning the price of candles, the capture of 100 new prisoners from his brigade, the rear guard, and those straggling behind the regiment. He states that the leader of the federals was Martin D. Hart, of Hunt County, Texas, formerly of the Texas legislature. He further mentions that his brigade has no cavalry, the raid by Hart's party in nearby Charleston, passing through Indian Nation, and the Battle of Prairie Grove. He states that his brigade is under the command of Col. J. W. Speight of Waco, Texas, and consists of 5 regiments, a battery of 4 guns, and no cavalry.
Feb. 8, 1863	From Headquarters, Camp on Red River, 21 miles from Paris, Texas, mentioning the severity of the march to Paris from Piney.
Mar. 6, 1863	From Camp Kiamishi, Choctaw Nation, mentioning the package he has received and describing the countryside. Guess states that Hawpe is no longer in command and is misleading people around Dallas. He mentions Generals Hindman and Holmes, and the personal slander against her(?).
Apr. 8, 1863	From Camp Kiamishi, Choctaw Nation, 2 nd Brigade, Department 2 nd (?), mentioning that General Price will probably take the place of Lt. Gen. Holmes, the Dallas post office, and the interference with his mail.
May 5, 1863	Camp in the Field, 5 miles of Clarksville, mentioning that he has been ordered to Alexandria, Louisiana, General Price, and that he has lost his pony.
July 6, 1863	Headquarters, Speight's Brigade, Camp near Thibodaux, Louisiana, mentioning the mail, the fighting in the vicinity, and that Banks is probably on his way to New Orleans from Port Hudson with fewer than 8,000 men.
Aug. 22, 1863	Camp Vermillion, Louisiana, 31 st Regiment, Texas volunteer Cavalry, Speight's Brigade, Mouton's Division, Taylor's District, mentioning sickness in the camp and that if orders come to move, the sick will have to be left behind for lack of transportation, that Banks' army is sick in New Orleans, and that slaves who escaped and returned report Banks has an army of 10,000 at Brashear City on Berwick Bay. He further reports that Grant is supposed to replace Meade on the Potomac, and mentions rumors of some kind of operations threatening northern Texas.
Sept. 9, 1863	Vermillionville, Louisiana, mentioning movement of his brigade, typhoid and yellow fever in the camps, federal troops at Brashear City and their advance as far as Camp Bisland. He states that the brigade of Louisiana troops reports 30,000 federals at the Bay

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	and on the Bayou Teche. He further states that 4 columns of federal troops are moving to Shreveport, Jefferson, or Marshall, and asks the reason why Col. Crockett does not go to war.
Sept. 15, 1863	Vermillionville, Louisiana, mentioning that he is leaving for Shreveport, his court martial, the terrors of war, and the death of Colonel Hawpe.
Sept. 22, 1862	Camp at Morgan's Ferry on Bayou Atchafalaya, Louisiana, near Washington, of the 31 st regiment of Texas Volunteer cavalry, mentioning that General Green is determined that the federals will not cross the bayou here, his need for clothing, the health of the regiment, his court martial, sweet potatoes, and reports concerning Bragg. He states that Louisianans have no love for people from Texas, and prefer federal greenbacks to confederate paper.
Oct. 12, 1863	From prison in New Orleans, stating that his letter must be submitted to Gen. Banks before mailing and that he was taken prisoner on Sept. 29 while examining a wounded man. He relates the kindness of the ladies towards the prisoners, and blames Colonel Speight for his present condition. He mentions that General Gardner, who defended Port Hudson, is in same prison, and states that Banks expects to overrun Texas with a force of 30,000 to 70,000.
June 5, 1864	Alexandria, Louisiana, stating that he must return to New Orleans as soon as he hears from General Smith.
June 18, 1864	Alexandria, Louisiana, mentioning that he has not yet left for New Orleans, that Colonel Burford has tendered his resignation in the army, and that General Smith has relieved Lt. General Taylor from duty. Guess states that sugar sells for \$6 a pound; that Polignac's army near Marksville is inactive, and that Gen. Walker's army is inactive around Alexandria. He mentions the scarcity of Confederate money and the effect it has on the price of articles, and requests a loan of gold money. He discusses General Kirby Smith's order pressing one-half of all cotton, and mentions Jayhawkers.
June 23, 1864	Alexandria, Louisiana, mentioning uncertainty of mail, the materials he sent for a new uniform, his poor health. He locates the armies of Gen. Polignac, Gen. Major, Gen. Walker, Gen. Steele, Gen. Whorten, and Gen. Taylor, and states that the federals have disappeared from this side of the Mississippi River. He states that Gen. Beauregard is neither dead nor crippled, and that Gen. Polk has died of a disease. He reports that Gen. Buckner will assume command of troops in Arkansas and Louisiana, and that Gen. Price will take the state of Missouri. He states that his condition is the same as a prisoner, and that Gen. Steele has gone towards Houston.
June 30, 1864	Alexandria, Louisiana, mentioning the mail, death of his nephew, his health, suffering caused by war, the currency. He mentions the rumor of Lee's victory over Grant, requests a loan of \$500 in gold, reports on troop movements, and that Gen. Kirby Smith

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has ordered Colonel Burford to be conscripted.

- July 4, 1864 Alexandria, Louisiana, mentioning his mail, the advisability of sending her daughter, Aurelia, away to school, and report that Kirby Smith wrote Major Campbell that he (Guess) was arrested for trading in cotton with the Yankees. Guess mentions that he has been ordered to remain in Shreveport by General Logan until exchanged.
- Aug. 16, 1864 Alexandria, Louisiana, mentioning the mail, his uniform, the election in Texas, and that command has been taken by General Buckner. He requests that she not borrow money for him. He mentions General Taylor, the bad news from Mobile and Atlanta, the surrender of Fort Gaines, and General Hood.
- Dec. 17, 1864 Shreveport, Louisiana, requesting clothing, mules, wagons, etc., from his place be sent him since he expects to return to duty.
- Jan. 5, 1865 Alexandria, Louisiana, concerning notice that General Kirby Smith has ordered him to be exchanged and that his case was laid before President Davis, who with the War Department decided in his favor. He requests gray scraps of material to mend his clothes, and mentions having signed the call for the secession convention of Texas.
- Feb. 9, 1865 Shreveport, Louisiana, stating reasons for having wanted gold, and states that people are becoming frightened about keeping slaves. Guess thinks that Governor Allen is hasty with his emancipation proclamation.
- Feb. 15, 1865 Shreveport, Louisiana, expressing love for her and her children, and requesting that Aurelia knit gloves for him.
- Apr. 9, 1865 Shreveport, Louisiana, describing his poor health.

INDEX TERMS

Cockrell, Monroe F. (Monroe Fulkerson), b. 1884.

Cockrell, Sarah Horton.

Confederate States of America. Army. Texas Cavalry Regiment, 31st.

Knights of the Golden Circle.

Louisiana--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Personal narratives, Confederate.

Money--Confederate States of America.

Polignac, Camille de, b. 1832.

Slaves--Emancipation--United States.

Soldiers--Texas.

Texas--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Personal narratives, Confederate.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Prisoners and prisons.

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u>			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder(s)</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
M:19	--	--	1 bound volume: George W. Guess Civil War Letters (1861-1865)