

The Athenaeum
219 South 6th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
(215) 925-2688
<http://www.philaathenaeum.org/>

Hours/Access Policy:

Monday-Friday: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

First Saturdays: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Research by appointment only.

Contact Information:

Phone: (215) 925-2688

Fax: (215) 925-3755

Bruce Lavery, Curator of Architecture, lavery@PhilaAthenaeum.org

Overview

The Athenaeum is a member supported, not-for-profit, special collections library founded in 1814 to collect materials "connected with the history and antiquities of America, and the useful arts, and generally to disseminate useful knowledge" for public benefit. Annually the Athenaeum's nationally significant collections attract thousands of readers: graduate students and senior scholars, architects, interior designers, museum curators, and private owners of historic buildings. It provides the Philadelphia region with a resource of first resort on matters of architecture and interior design history, particularly for the period 1800 to 1945.

Civil War Collection

The Athenaeum's Civil War collection is comprised of the Thomas Ustick Walter collection and Walter's view of the war from Philadelphia. The collection also contains many monographs written during and/or about the Civil War.

Collection Highlights, or of interest

The Home Front/Civilians

Documentary-Manuscript

1. Thomas Ustick Walter Collection diary and letter book/personal and business 1861-65. Walter working on the Capitol building in WDC during war years—he sent his wife and children back to Philadelphia for the duration. Letters to his wife detail life in the Capitol, his attitudes towards the war, and concerns for his family. No correspondence from his

wife to him. Family lived in Germantown neighborhood, house no longer stands. Walter expresses strong anti-war sentiment, not clear how much of that is related to race and how much related to war derailing his major project. Interesting letter from the day AL assassinated.

2. Minutes during the period of the war.

3. List of book acquisitions leading up to and through war years.

Prints

1. Ink and watercolor of Girard College 1835.

2. Drawings of the U.S. Capitol 1855 describing damages soldiers did when living there during the war years.

Building

The building itself was a witness to much of the war. It was open during the war years and was very close to major recruiting posts on Independence Square and Lincoln's lying in state in the Hall.

Lincoln in Philadelphia

Documentary

1. Thomas Ustick Walter Collection—April 1865 letter to wife about assassination.

2. Minutes from Athenaeum Board Meeting about assassination and what members should do to show proper respect and the way in which the building would be draped during period of mourning.

Legacy

Documentary

1. The siege of Richmond: a narrative of the military operations of Major-General George B. McClellan during ... May and June, 1862. By Joel Cook ... (Published in Philadelphia by G. W. Childs)

2. Diary [notes on the Civil War] by Adam Gurowski. v. 1. March 4, 1861, to November 12, 1862.--v. 2. November 18, 1862, to October 18, 1863.--v. 3. 1863-'64-'65. (Polish author, died in 1866, this was his last work published)

3. The trial of the Constitution. By Sidney George Fisher. Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott & Co., [etc., etc.] 1862.

4. Among the pines : or, South in secession-time / by Edmund Kirke [pseud.]. New York : J.R. Gilmore, Charles T. Evans, 1862.

5. The true story of the barons of the South; or, The rationale of the American conflict. By E. W. Reynolds. Boston, Walker, Wise and company, 1862. Contents: Pt. I. Our two systems of society.-pt. II. Our political apostasy.-pt. III. Our political regeneration.-pt. IV. The rebellion of the barons.-pt. V. The providential alternative. Introduction by Rev. Samuel J. May.
6. Thirteen months in the Rebel army: being a narrative of personal adventures in the infantry, ordnance, cavalry, courier, and hospital services; with an exhibition of the power, purposes, earnestness, military despotism, and demoralization of the south, by an impressed New Yorker. New York, A. S. Barnes & Burr, 1862
7. Courage in a good cause; or, The lawful and courageous use of the sword. A sermon by George Duffield, Jr., Pastor of Coates Street Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia. Delivered April 21, 1861. [Philadelphia] T. B. Pugh, [1861]
8. The duty of Christians in the present crisis : a letter to a Christian brother / by H. Grattan Guinness. Philadelphia : Collins, printer, 1861.
9. The causes of the American civil war : a letter to the London Times / by John Lothrop Motley. New York : J.G. Gregory, 1861. - Bound with: S.G. Fisher, The laws of race (Philadelphia, W.P. Hazard, 1860)
10. Pictures of southern life : social, political, and military ; written for the London Times / by William Howard Russell. New York : J.G. Gregory, 1861. Letters from various places in the South, dated April 30 to June 23, 1861, written from the standpoint of an outsider. This collection, with 5 additional letters, also published as: The civil war in America (Boston, G.A. Fuller, 1861)
11. The rebellion : its latent causes and true significance ; in letters to a friend abroad / by Henry T. Tuckerman. New York : J.G. Gregory, 1861
12. The great civil war in America : speech of Hon. Clement Laird Vallandigham, of Ohio, in the House of Representatives, January 14, 1863.
13. My diary North and South. By William Howard Russell. Boston, T.O.H.P. Burnham; New York, O.S. Felt, 1863. The author was acting as war correspondent for the London Times. Continued in his Canada; its defences [sic], condition, and resources. 1865.
14. Hospital transports : a memoir of the embarkation of the sick and wounded from the peninsula of Virginia in the summer of 1862 / compiled and published at the request of the Sanitary Commission. Olmsted, Frederick Law, 1822-1903. Boston : Ticknor and Fields, 1863. (gift to the Athenaeum from Horace Binney, Jr.)

15. The bivouac and the battlefield : or, Campaign sketches in Virginia and Maryland / by George F. Noyes. New York : Harper & brothers, 1863.
16. The great rebellion : a history of the civil war in the United States / by J.T. Headley ... in two volumes: vol. I. Hartford, Conn. : Hurlbut, Williams & company, 1863. Vol. 2 appeared in 1866 with a new ed. of the present vol., dated 1865.
17. Annals of the Army of the Cumberland : comprising biographies, descriptions of departments, accounts of expeditions, skirmishes, and battles ; also its police record of spies, smugglers and prominent rebel emissaries ; together with anecdotes, incidents, poetry, reminiscences, etc. and official reports of the battle of Stone River / by an officer. Philadelphia : J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1863.
18. The iron furnace : or, slavery and secession / By Rev. John H. Aughey, a refugee from Mississippi. Philadelphia : William S. & Alfred Martien, 1863.
19. Narrative of privations and sufferings of United States officers and soldiers while prisoners of war in the hands of the Rebel authorities. Being the report of a commission of inquiry, appointed by the United States sanitary commission. With an appendix, containing the testimony. Philadelphia. Printed for the U.S. sanitary commission by King and Baird, 1864.
20. The Rebellion record; a diary of American events, with documents, narratives, illustrative incidents, poetry, etc. Ed. by Frank Moore. With an introductory address, on the causes of the struggle, and the great issues before the country, by Edward Everett. New York, G. P. Putnam, 1861-1863; D. Van Nostrand , 1864-68.
21. Report on the organization and campaigns of the Army of the Potomac: to which is added an account of the campaign in western Virginia, with plans of battle-fields. By George B. McClellan ... New York, Sheldon & Company, 1864.
22. Roll of honor; names of soldiers who died in defence of the American union, interred in the national cemeteries ... Washington DC : Government Printing Office, 1865-1871. 27 volumes
23. Nurse and spy in the Union army: comprising the adventures and experiences of a woman in hospitals, camps, and battle-fields. By S. Emma E. Edmonds. Hartford [etc.] W.S. Williams [etc.] 1865 [c1864] Also issued under title: "Unsexed: or, The female soldier"; and "The female spy of the Union army".

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How to Conduct Research at the Athenaeum:
<http://www.philaathenaeum.org/research.html>

Online Catalogs:

<http://www.philaathenaeum.org/catalog.html>