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


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]


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)


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.


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


For more information about the Athenaeum’s Collections, please visit the following pages:

How to Conduct Research at the Athenaeum: http://www.philaathenaeum.org/research.html
Online Catalogs:
http://www.philaathenaeum.org/catalog.html