

**David Ireland, 1832-1864
Papers, 1860-1864****X18023**

Quantity: 11 items (oversize)
Access: Open to research
Acquisition: Purchase; Walter R. Benjamin Autographs; May 1984; items accessioned separately: 18023-18033; collated ca. 1994.
Processed by: Nicholas Webb, Student Assistant, State University of New York at Albany, June 2008

Biographical Note:

Colonel David Ireland was born in Forfar, Scotland, in 1832. In 1840 his family emigrated to New York, but he did not formally become a citizen of the United States until 1860.

Ireland joined the New York State militia about 1852 and seems to have spent his entire adult life in military service. In 1860 he became adjutant of the 79th New York State Militia Regiment under Colonel James Cameron. When the Civil War broke out in the spring of 1861, this regiment was one of the first to be involved in the conflict, in July 1861, at the First Battle of Bull Run. In August he was promoted to captain in the 15th US Army Regiment and assigned to training and recruiting duty, first at Newport Barracks, Kentucky, and later in Binghamton, New York.

In August 1862, Ireland was promoted to colonel and was given command of the 137th New York Volunteers, a newly-formed regiment made up of men from Broome, Tompkins and Tioga counties. In the spring of 1863, the regiment fought at the Battle of Chancellorsville; they then marched to Pennsylvania, where they took part in the Battle of Gettysburg. On the second day of the battle, Ireland and his regiment were assigned to hold the right flank at Culp's Hill, where, despite heavy losses, they held the line and prevented Confederate troops from reaching the strategically vital Baltimore Pike.

Following the Battle of Gettysburg, Ireland and his regiment were transferred to Tennessee in the western theater. In October they fought at the Battle of Wauhatchie, where Ireland's superior officer, General George S. Greene of the Third Brigade, was critically wounded and relieved of his command. Ireland was tapped to replace him as commander of the Third Brigade, which he led at several more battles in Tennessee that autumn, including Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge and Ringgold Gap. Despite the efforts of his commanding officers, Ireland was not promoted to brigadier general, remaining a colonel throughout the remainder of his command.

In 1864, Ireland's brigade fought its way south through Georgia as part of General William T. Sherman's Atlanta Campaign. Ireland was wounded at the Battle of Resaca in May and briefly relieved of his duties, but was back in command in time to see the capture of Atlanta on September 2. He fell victim, however, to a sudden and unexpected attack of dysentery, and on September 10, 1864, he died in Atlanta.

Scope and Content Note:

This collection consists of six letters, a special resolution, and four printed certificates, all of which relate to Colonel David Ireland's military service during the Civil War.

Three of the letters are formal reports by Ireland to his superior officers which describe the actions of his troops during various battles. The first discusses Chancellorsville, the second Gettysburg, and the third several battles in Tennessee. The remaining letters document Ireland's attempt to secure a promotion to the rank of brigadier general following his replacement of General George S. Greene as commander of the Third Brigade. Two are letters of support from Generals John W. Geary and H.W. Slocum and the third is by Ireland himself.

(Note that all but one of the six letters, the exception being Ireland's letter to Secretary of War Stanton requesting promotion to brigadier general, are explicitly labeled as being copies. The four letters attributed to Ireland are in an identical hand, as is General Geary's letter of recommendation; General Slocum's letter is in a different hand.)

The manuscript is a resolution passed by Ireland's fellow officers which expresses sorrow at his untimely death and praises his qualities as a commander and as a gentleman. The printed certificates consist of Ireland's certificate of citizenship and his commissions as adjutant, captain and colonel in various regiments; the 1861 certificate confirming his commission as a captain is signed by President Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of War Simon Cameron.

The collection is a collation of single accessions 18023-18033.

Container List:

Item	Description
	Correspondence
1	Letter (copy) to C.P. Horton, May 12, 1863, Camp near Aquia, Creek, Va.; report on the engagement of the 137 th New York Volunteers near Chancellorsville on April 30 1863. (#18027) (includes transcript)
2	Letter (copy) to C.P. Horton, July 6, 1863, Littlestown, Pa.; report on the actions of the 137 th New York Volunteers at Gettysburg. (#18028) (includes transcript)
3	Letter (copy) to Captain [?], December 5, 1863, Wauhatchie, Tenn.; report on the actions of the Third Brigade from November 24 to November 29, 1863. Includes details on the battles at Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge, and Ringgold Gap. (#18029) (includes transcript)
4	General John W. Geary. Letter (copy) to E.M. Stanton, Secretary of War, December 22, 1863, Wauhatchie, Tenn.; requests appointment of David Ireland to the rank of brigadier general. (#18030) (includes transcript)
5	Letter to E.M. Stanton, Secretary of War, January 1, 1864, Wauhatchie, Tenn.; requests appointment to the rank of brigadier general. (#18031) (includes transcript)
6	General H.W. Slocum. Letter (copy) to E.M. Stanton, Secretary of War,

Item	Description
	February 6, 1864, Tullahoma, Tenn.; recommends appointment of David Ireland to the rank of brigadier general. (#18032) (includes transcript)
	Resolution
7	H.A. Barnum. Resolution, September 10, 1864, re: the death of Col. David Ireland. Expresses the sorrow of Ireland's fellow officers following his unexpected death. (#18033) (includes transcript)
	Printed Certificates
8	New York (County) Court of Common Pleas. Certificate of Citizenship, March 24, 1860, to David Ireland. (#18023)
9	Appointment, December 13, 1860, Albany, of David Ireland as adjutant of the 79 th Regiment, 4 th Brigade, 1 st Division of the New York State Militia. Printed form, signed by Governor Edwin D. Morgan. (#18024)
10	Commission, August 19, 1861, [Washington] of David Ireland as captain in the 15 th Regiment of Infantry. Printed form, signed by President Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of War Simon Cameron. (#18025) ORIGINAL STORED IN THE VAULT
11	Appointment, November 1, 1862, Albany, of David Ireland as colonel in the 137 th Regiment of Infantry, New York State Volunteers. Printed form, signed by Governor Edwin D. Morgan. (#18026)

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