

Records of the Westborough Rifle Company, 1861-1870

Finding Aid

Last Revised: October 28, 2015

Collection Summary

- Collection number:** 2014.03
Collection title: Records of the Westborough Rifle Company, 1861-1870
Dates: 1861-1870
Size: 2.75 linear feet (2 boxes + materials in the Military Oversize Box).
Creator/Collector: The Westborough Rifle Company
Acquisitions info.: Transferred to the Westborough Public Library from the Town Clerk's Office, which retains official custody of the collection.
Custodial history: This collection was among a group of historical records that were transferred from the Town Clerk's Office vault to the Westborough Public Library during the renovation of Town Hall starting in 2013. The records in this collection were housed in a large envelope labeled, "Civil War Papers," inside a box labeled, "Town Documents, Volume 2," and had been organized by librarian Dorothy Cowern. There is no record of ownership or stewardship of the documents before or after this time.
Language(s): English
Repository: The Westborough Public Library
Processed by: Dorothy Cowern, 1975; reprocessed by Anthony T. Vaver, 2014

Rights and Access

Access restrictions: Collection is open for research.

Physical access restrictions: None, although researchers are encouraged to use any available digital images from the collection.

Publication rights: All records are in the public domain.

Organizational History

The Westborough Rifle Company was organized on April 29, 1861, and when it departed to serve in the American Civil War, it included fifty-six men from Westborough and forty-five men from the surrounding towns of Southborough, Upton, Shrewsbury, Hopkinton, and Northborough. The Company was mustered into service at Fort Independence in Boston on July 16, 1861, where it became Company K, 13th Regiment, Massachusetts Infantry. On July 29, the Company left Fort Independence, and as the train carrying the regiment to the war front rolled through Westborough, hundreds of Westborough citizens showed up to wave and cheer on the soldiers.

Westborough men continued to join the war effort and served in Company C, 34th Regiment; Company E, 51st Regiment; Company B, 57th Regiment; and with the Brigade

Band, Corps d’Afrique. Soldiers from Westborough saw action at Newbern, Bull Run, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, Wilderness, North Anna River, Cold Harbor, Antietam, Chancellorsville, Mine Run, Spotsylvania, Totopotomy, and Petersburg.

A total of 337 soldiers from Westborough served in the American Civil War. Sixty-two of the men were wounded and twenty-five died (fourteen from wounds, three from disease, and eight in Southern prisons). Only five of the dead made it back to Westborough for burial.

Scope and Content Note

The collection includes meeting minutes, personnel records, financial accounts, bills and receipts, payroll records, and a letter by Capt. William P. Blackmer from Harper’s Ferry on October 4, 1861 that refers to the abolitionist John Brown. The Company included men from Southborough, Upton, Shrewsbury, Hopkinton, and Northborough, and some of the records in this collection contain information on soldiers and administration that relate to these surrounding towns of Westborough.

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Collection Inventory

Series 1: Administration

Military Oversize Box

Folder

M.15 Meeting Minutes, 1861

Series 2: Personnel

Box 1

Folder

1.01 List of Soldiers Enlisted in U. S. Service, 1861

1.02 Enlistment and Letters of Consent, 1861-1862

Box 2

Folder

2.01 *Complete Record of the Names of All the Soldiers and Officers in the Military Service and of All the Seamen and Officers in the Naval Service of the United States from the Town of Westboro. Worcester County, Mass. during the Rebellion Begun in 1861, 1863.*

Military Oversize Box

Folder

M.16 Wounds, Discharges, Pensions, and Aid to Families, 1861-1870

Series 3: Finance

Box 1

Folder

- 1.03 Accounts of Expenses, 1861-1863, n.d.
- 1.04 Bills and Receipts for Supplies, 1861-1862
- 1.05 Bills and Receipts for Services, 1861-1862
- 1.06 Men and Supplies from Southborough and Upton, 1861

Military Oversize Box

Folder

- M.17 Payrolls, 1861-1864

Series 4: Correspondence

Box 1

Folder

- 1.07 Letter from Capt. William P. Blackmer, Harper's Ferry, 10/4/1861

Series 5: Envelopes from the Old Storage Box

Box 1

Folder

- 1.08 Storage Envelopes from the Original "Town Documents, Volume 2" Box, 1975 [Note: The envelopes were created by librarian Dorothy Cowern when she organized the contents of the "Documents, 1709-1831" box.]