

Library Company of Philadelphia

McA 5778.F

**CIVIL WAR VOLUNTEER SALOONS
AND HOSPITALS EPHEMERA COLLECTION**

1861-1868

1.88 linear feet, 2 boxes

Series I. Volunteer Refreshment Committees, 1861-1868

Series II. Citizens' Volunteer Hospital, 1862-1865

May 2006

Descriptive Summary**Repository**

Library Company of Philadelphia
1314 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-5698

Call Number

McA 5778.F

Creator

McAllister, John A. (John Allister), 1822-1896.

Title

Civil War Volunteer Saloons and Hospitals Ephemera Collection

Inclusive Dates

1861-1868

Quantity

1.88 linear feet (2 boxes)

Language of Materials

Materials are in English.

Abstract

The Civil War Volunteer Saloons and Hospitals Ephemera Collection holds ephemera and a few pieces of correspondence (including letters to and from Samuel B. Fales, William M. Cooper, and Arad Barrows) that illustrate and describe the workings of the Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloon and the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, which provided meals, newspapers, bathing facilities, and changes of underwear and socks, to soldiers passing through Philadelphia. Between them, the saloons operated twenty-four hours a day and depended solely on contributions of time and goods from local citizens and merchants. The ephemera is somewhat similar for each group, and consists primarily of donation acknowledgements, event tickets and programs, flyers, and circular letters that the committees used to raise funds.

Administrative Information**Restrictions to Access**

The collection is open to researchers.

Acquisition Information

Gift of John A. McAllister; forms part of the McAllister Collection.

Processing Information

The Civil War Volunteer Saloons and Hospitals Ephemera Collection material was formerly housed in a folio album that had been created after the McAllister Collection arrived at the Library Company. The material was removed from the album, and arranged and described in 2006, under grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the William Penn Foundation. The collection was processed by Sandra Markham. Any views, findings, conclusions or

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Preferred Citation

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Online Catalog Headings

Subject Names

Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon and Hospital (Philadelphia, Pa.)
 Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloon
 Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Committee
 Cooper Shop Soldiers' Home
 Citizens Volunteer Hospital Association (Philadelphia, Pa.)
 Fales, Samuel Bradford, 1808-1880
 Cooper, William M., d. 1880
 Barrows, Arad, 1818-1888

Subject Topics

Soldier's homes--Philadelphia
 Benefit performances--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia
 Charities--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia
 Lectures and lecturing--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia
 Canteens (Establishments)--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia
 Fairs--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia
 United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865
 Philadelphia (Pa.)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865
 United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Civilian relief
 United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--War work.
 United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Medical care
 Advertisements--Lectures and lecturing
 Philanthropy
 Women

Document Types

Tickets
 Clippings
 Memorabilia
 Ephemera

Letters

Related Collections

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania holds three groups of records that cover the administration and activities of the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon: the Samuel B. Fales Collection (Coll. 1580), the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon and Hospital record and scrapbook (Coll. 2038), and the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon Telegrams (Coll. 2074), which together contain the records of troops passing through Philadelphia, hospital admissions and deaths; records of Southerners separated from their families; the Ladies Union Volunteer Refreshment Committee minutes; miscellaneous tickets, envelopes, and memorabilia; and several hundred telegrams sent to inform the Union's committee of troops arriving in Philadelphia. The society's Edward S. Hall Papers (Coll. 256) include material relating to the Cooper Shop and Solder's Home.

Biographical/Historical Notes

The concept of the Civil War volunteer refreshment saloon came about in April 1861, when hundreds of enlisted men from all over Pennsylvania began to stream into Philadelphia on their way to fight in the South. They were followed by thousands more soldiers from New England, New York, and the West who arrived in Camden by train, crossed the Delaware River by ferry, and disembarked at the Washington Avenue piers in southeast Philadelphia. Once there, they waited for trains going south from the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad depot on Washington at Broad Street. No government or military agencies had made provisions for feeding or caring for these transients, so Philadelphians stepped up to help by delivering coffee and sandwiches from their own homes to the men in the streets.

As the numbers swelled, residents quickly organized to find a better way to care for the troops who loitered in the neighborhood. The result was the founding of two friendly rivals: the Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloon and the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon. The former was created when prosperous barrel makers William M. Cooper and Henry Pearce offered for use their two-story brick building on Otsego Street below Washington, two blocks from the river. Cooper retrofitted the shop's fireplace to make a huge stove for brewing the gallons of coffee needed hourly, set up tables for serving meals, and remained president of the saloon's committee through the end of the war. The Union saloon, first known as "Brown's," was organized by merchant Barzilai S. Brown. It began as a street corner picnic table with a coffee boiler, but moved into a former boat shop and rigger's loft on the southwest corner of Washington Avenue and Swanson Street. The saloon's chairman was Arad Barrows, and the financial manager was Samuel B. Fales.

Both saloons opened for service in late May 1861. At no charge to the servicemen, they provided meals, newspapers, bathing facilities, changes of underwear and socks, and assistance in

writing letters to loved ones at home; postage also was provided for free, and the recruits left for the South with their haversacks filled. Between them, the saloons operated twenty-four hours a day as they depended solely on contributions of time and goods from neighborhood citizens and merchants. Those donations were supplemented by funds raised at a benefit fairs, concerts, and lectures held around the city, some of which benefited both organizations.

Each saloon had a "committee of reception" that worked with the transportation companies to receive advance notice of troop arrivals. When a regiment's appearance was imminent, a small cannon was fired to alert volunteers to duty. The Cooper Shop's first recorded patron group was the 8th New York, a regiment of 780 men who landed at the pier on May 27. The following day three more arrived: the 9th New York (812 men), the 2nd New York (450 men) and the Garibaldi (1,100 men). Shortly after opening, the saloons also began to feed the thousands of injured soldiers who were making their way back from the battlefields to their homes in the north. By the time the saloons closed their doors in August 28, 1865, they had dispensed more than 1,000,000 meals. Within hours of the official closing ceremonies, however, it was discovered that more troops were arriving in the city, and a call went out to reopen both saloons. The Cooper Shop declined to do so, but the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon went back into business, serving some 30,000 more men before completely closing on December 1, 1865.

In addition to feeding transients, the saloons' committees branched out to create hospitals, thus relieving the local families who had been taking the sick and wounded into their homes. The Cooper Shop Hospital opened on October 29, 1861, with eleven beds set up in the second floor of their building, and in March 1862 expanding to hold sixteen more. The staff consisted of two volunteer physicians, the brothers Nebinger, and a manager, Anna M. Ross, but was otherwise staffed by neighborhood women. The Union Volunteer Hospital was opened in a separate building next door to their saloon which was soon after replaced by a larger facility that hospital held 100 beds. The Union Volunteer hospital treated more than 30,000 sick and wounded soldiers in its time.

The Cooper Shop also provided two other services to the military veterans: a dedicated burial lot in Philadelphia's Mount Moriah Cemetery, and a home for soldiers and seamen who were honorably discharged, disabled and in distress. The Cooper Shop Soldiers' Home was located at northwest corner of Race and Crown streets in buildings owned by the city of Philadelphia that had been used as a government hospital. It opened on December 22, 1863, merged three years later with the Soldiers' Home of Philadelphia, and closed in 1872. Ephemera from the Soldiers' Home of Philadelphia is filed in the McAllister Collection's Civil War Miscellanies (McA 5786).

Operating at the same time, the Citizens' Volunteer Hospital was a separate organization from the refreshment saloons, and was located at the northeast corner of Washington Avenue and Broad Street, across from the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad depot. Opened in September 1862, it functioned as a reception and triage unit, keeping there the most severely

wounded men while sending the others to the temporary hospitals set up in and around the city. Citizens' Volunteer Hospital had the capacity to hold between 400 and 700 patients, and by May 1864 reported that it had treated 50,000 men. It closed in August 1865.

Predating the United States Sanitary Commission by a few months, Philadelphia's volunteer refreshment saloons and their hospitals are considered to be the first great patriotic charities of the Civil War period.

Collection Overview

The Civil War Volunteer Saloons and Hospitals Ephemera Collection contains material related to three charitable organizations founded by Philadelphians during the first months of the war. It is arranged in two series: Volunteer Refreshment Committees; and Citizens' Volunteer Hospital. It is arranged in two series: Series I, Volunteer Refreshment Committees, and Series II, Citizens' Volunteer Hospital.

Series I, Volunteer Refreshment Committees (1861-1868) holds ephemera and a few pieces of correspondence that illustrate and describe the workings of the Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, and both of their hospitals. The ephemera is somewhat similar for each group, and consists primarily of donation acknowledgements, event tickets and programs, flyers, and circular letters that the committees used to raise funds.

The Union saloon files hold a few different items, including a pair of visiting card-sized print pieces, one which illustrates the cannon which was fired to announce the arriving troops, and another to show the carved and gilded eagle that was mounted on the roof of the saloon. Also within the files is a selection of small cardstock folders with lithographed illustrations of the saloon and hospital buildings which, according to annotations by Samuel Fales, were placed under each soldier's plate at mealtime. Printed on the inside are histories of the organization, names of the committee members, and on some, a welcoming statement and list of places of interest within the city.

One unique piece was sent to McAllister by Fales: a printed circular letter addressed to contributors to "The Association to Procure Employment for Rebel Deserters, who have taken the Oath of Allegiance to the United States," a group that was formed on March 23, 1865, two weeks prior to the end of the war. The circular serves as a financial report covering the expenditures made by the association's executive committee, whose major contribution to "weakening the enemy's ranks" was in distributing one night 30,000 copies of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* to Lee's army. The paper contained a report of the public meeting that outlined the goals of the association, and resulted in the desertion of more than six hundred men the next day. When the war ended and its work was finished, the committee voted to give their remaining funds specifically to the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, as that organization

had provided meals to the deserters while the Cooper Shop had refused to do so. Fales tied one of the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon's special green tickets, which a deserter could redeem for a meal, to the circular, and annotated the circular to explain its presence.

Following the subseries for each saloon is one for material printed for both saloons, which reflects cooperative endeavors to raise funds for both organizations at once. Also there is a single ticket to the grand closing events for the saloons, which was held at the Academy of Music on August 28, 1865.

Newspaper clippings about the saloons can be found both in Box 1 folder 19, and in Box 2 folder 21. The oversize clippings held in Box 2 include an enumeration of the troops entertained in the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, with a brief history of each organization.

Series II, Citizens' Volunteer Hospital (1862-1865) holds just five pieces of ephemera related to that hospital and its fundraising efforts.

Box Folder

SERIES I. VOLUNTEER REFRESHMENT COMMITTEES

1861-1868

Arranged in three subseries: Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Committee;
Union Volunteer Refreshment Committee; and Combined Committees.

Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Committee

1	1	Hospital	1862, undated
		Refreshment Saloon	
	2	Correspondence	1862-1866
		Ephemera	
	3	Donation receipts and acknowledgements	1861-1864
	4	Fundraising appeals	1864, undated
	5	Fundraising events	1861-1864
	6	Miscellaneous	1864, undated
	7	Soldier's burial lot	undated
	8	Soldier's Home	1863

Union Volunteer Refreshment Committee

	9	Deserters circular and meal ticket	1865
	10	Hospital	circa 1862
		Refreshment Saloon	
	11	Donation receipts and acknowledgements	undated
	12	Fundraising appeals	1861-1865
	13	Fundraising events	1861-1864
	14	Illustrated card folders	1861-1865
	15	Rules and regulations placard	circa 1861

Box Folder

SERIES I. VOLUNTEER REFRESHMENT COMMITTEES, cont.

Union Volunteer Refreshment Committee, cont.

Refreshment Saloon, cont.

[1]	16	Miscellaneous	1862-1863, undated
		Combined committees	
	17	Fundraising events	1861-1864
	18	Closing ceremonies	1865 Aug 28
	19	Newspaper clippings See also Box 2 folder 21 for oversize clippings	1861-1868

SERIES II. CITIZENS' VOLUNTEER HOSPITAL

	20	Ephemera	1862-1865
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