

Collection #
SC 2647

OWEN BROWN FAMILY PAPERS 1858–1910 (BULK 1862–1863)

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

Glenn McMullen
29 December 1998
Revised 3 July 2002
Updated 9 March 2004

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

-

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 3 folders

COLLECTION
DATES: 1858–1910, n.d. (inclusive); (bulk 1862–1863)

PROVENANCE: John E. Hurt, Esq., McNutt, Hurt & Blue, PO Box 1436,
Martinsville, IN 46161-0436, 24 November 1998.

RESTRICTIONS: None

COPYRIGHT:

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.

ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: None

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1999.0177

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Owen Brown (1830–63) was the son of Frederick Brown (1807–77), who was a younger brother of the abolitionist John Brown (1800–59). Owen Brown enlisted in the 88th Illinois Infantry on 8 August 1862, from Kinmundy (Marion County), Illinois. He was a corporal in Company B. Brown suffered from illness during much of his period of service and died in a Nashville, Tennessee hospital on 2 February 1863.

Brown was married to Ann Rebekah Meyers (1837–?) and had four children: Charles Arthur Brown (born 1858), John Owen Brown (born 1860), Pink Dell Brown (born 1861), and Anna May Brown (1863–1941). Brown's wife remarried after his death; she later annotated Brown's 21 August 1862, letter: "March 22, 1868. This evening I hav looked over all those dear leters, perhaps for the last time while I live [:] they are to be saved for my children. Anna Brown Deter. Soon I will be a mother again."

When Owen Brown enlisted in the 88th Illinois, he and his wife and children lived in Kinmundy, a small town in south central Illinois. His father and other family members lived in Hudson, Ohio (near Cleveland), where Brown's grandfather, also named Owen Brown, had moved his family from Connecticut in the early nineteenth century. Ann Brown and her children returned to Hudson while Brown was in the Union army.

The 88th Illinois Infantry Regiment, known as the Second Board of Trade Regiment, was organized in Chicago in September 1862 and was mustered in on 4 September for a three-year term. It was ordered to Louisville, Kentucky, on 4 September and participated in the Battle of Perryville on 8 October 1862. It encamped near Nashville, Tennessee, on 17 November, and Owen Brown was hospitalized in the city soon thereafter. The regiment marched in the advance upon Murfreesboro on 26 December and was engaged in the Battle of Stone River, 31 December 3 1862–3 January 1863. It went on to participate in the Battle of Mission Ridge (November 1863), the Atlanta Campaign (May–September 1864), and the Battle of Nashville (December 1864). The regiment was mustered out 9 June 1865, and returned to Chicago on 13 June 1865.

Sources:

Information in the collection.

Illinois. Adjutant General's Office, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois* (Springfield Ill.: 1886), Vol. 5, p. 243.

Historical Data Systems, Inc., American Civil War Research and Genealogy Database (<http://www.civilwardata.com/>).

J. H. G. Brinkerhoff, *Brinkerhoff's History of Marion County, Illinois* (Indianapolis: 1909), p. 88.

Gerald W. McFarland, *A Scattered People: An American Family Moves West* (New York: 1985).

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection largely consists of Owen Brown's Civil War correspondence to his wife Ann. His letters date from 17 August 1862, soon after he had enlisted in the Union Army, to 20 January 1863, two weeks before his death. Other Civil War related items include a letter from Jennie Brown, Owen's sister, to him (21 and 28 September 1862); a letter from Frederick Brown, Owen's father, to him (28 December 1862), and a letter from Horace B. Kinne to Ann Brown informing her of Owen's death (2 February 1863). One of Owen Brown's letters (28 September 1862) is available only as a typescript copy.

Owen Brown's Civil War letters deal largely with his concern for his wife and children; their move to Hudson, Ohio; his declining health, hospitalization, and hopes for a discharge; news and questions about friends and relatives; and information on the activities of the 88th Illinois. A reference to the regiment's involvement in a battle, probably Stone River, is in his 7 January 1863, letter, written from a Nashville hospital: "We have just had the hardest fighting here that has ever been fought. This hospital is full of the wounded--the whole town is full."

One letter, from September 1858, predates the war. In it, Owen Brown writes to his wife from St. Louis and describes his experiences at a fair in the city. Two annotated envelopes (1903 and 1910) give some genealogical information on the Brown family, as does a six-page genealogical chart ("Descendants of Peter Brown II").

There is no mention of John Brown or abolitionism in Owen Brown's letters, or in other letters in the collection.

CONTENTS

| CONTENTS | CONTAINER |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Correspondence, 1858–63 | Folder 1 |
| Envelopes, 1903, 1910 | Folder 2 |
| Genealogical information, n.d. | Folder 3 |

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, SC 2647).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.