

**Charles Kline Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2015**

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm2015085998>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms015022>

Prepared by Connie L. Cartledge

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2015

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Charles Kline Papers

**Span Dates:** 1862-1907

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1862-1864)

**ID No.:** MSS85998

**Creator:** Kline, Charles, 1840-1903

**Extent:** 125 items

**Extent:** 2 containers

**Extent:** 0.6 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

**Location:** Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2015085998>

**Summary:** Union soldier. Correspondence, including originals and transcripts of letters, envelopes, newspaper clippings, pension documents, a copy of a photograph, and a drawing relating mainly to Kline's Civil War service with the 115th New York Infantry Regiment.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

### People

Butler, Benjamin F. (Benjamin Franklin), 1818-1893.

Kline family--Correspondence.

Kline, Alida--Correspondence.

Kline, Ann Maria--Correspondence.

Kline, Charles, 1840-1903.

Kline, Sarah J.--Correspondence.

Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865.

### Organizations

Hampton Military Hospital.

United States. Army--Military life.

United States. Army. New York Infantry Regiment, 115th (1862-1865). Company D.

### Subjects

Military hospitals--South Carolina--Hilton Head.

Military hospitals--Virginia--Hampton.

Prisoners of war--Illinois--Chicago.

### Places

Alexandria (Va.)--History.

Beaufort (S.C.)--History.

Bermuda Hundred (Va.)--History.

Charleston (S.C.)--History.

Fort Gilmer (Va.)

Harpers Ferry (W. Va.)--History.

Hilton Head (S.C.)--History.

New York (State)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Petersburg (Va.)--History--Siege, 1864-1865.

South Carolina--Description and travel.

South Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Campaigns.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Health aspects.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Hospitals.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Medical care.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Participation, African American.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Prisoners and prisons.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Virginia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
West Virginia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

### **Occupations**

Army officers.

## **Provenance**

The papers of Charles Kline, Union soldier, were given to the Library of Congress by David O. McNeil, great-grandson of Kline, in 2015.

## **Other Repositories**

Photocopies of a typewritten transcript of Charles Kline's letters, 1862-1864, and one photocopy of a letter from 1864 pertaining to Kline being wounded can be found at the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, S.C.

## **Copyright Status**

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Charles Kline is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

## **Access and Restrictions**

The papers of Charles Kline are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

## **Preferred Citation**

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Charles Kline Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## **Biographical Note**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
1840, Feb. 22	Born, Tribes Hill, N.Y.
1862, July 24	Enlisted in Company D, 115th New York Infantry Regiment, United States Army.
1865, June 17	Mustered out from 115th New York Infantry Regiment, United States Army.
1868, Jan. 1	Married Louisa Whiting (died 1870)
1872, Nov. 20	Married Esther Heath
1903, Oct. 27	Died, Amsterdam, N.Y.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Charles Kline (1840-1903) span the years 1862-1907 with the bulk of the material dating from 1862 to 1864. The papers are in English and are arranged by type of material.

The majority of the collection consists of letters from Kline to his mother, Alida Kline, and his two sisters, Ann Maria Kline and Sarah J. Kline. The papers document Kline's service as a Union soldier with the 115th New York Infantry Regiment. The 1862 letters are reproduced in typed transcripts prepared by Gordon Heath McNeil, Kline's grandson. The correspondence for 1862 chronicles Kline's capture at Harpers Ferry; his time in a prison camp in Chicago, while awaiting a prisoner exchange; daily camp life, including death and disease suffered by his fellow soldiers; and his service near Alexandria, Virginia. Most of the letters for 1863 pertain to his duties while stationed in Hilton Head, South Carolina, particularly the construction work at Fort Mitchell. Also treated are descriptions of Hilton Head and Beaufort, South Carolina, a few references to engagements to take the city of Charleston, and details about the large number of men sick and wounded in the hospital at Hilton Head. While at Hilton Head, Kline also fell ill and was hospitalized. In a letter of 13 July 1863, he writes of being displaced due to the great number of badly wounded soldiers arriving at the hospital.

Letters dating from early September 1863 to the end of March 1864 document Kline's tenure in Elmira, New York, where he was part of a detachment in charge of training African-American draftees and volunteers. At the end of April 1864, Kline was reunited with his regiment at Yorktown, Virginia. The letters for 1864 provide details of his activities in Virginia, in particular the area around Bermuda Hundred and Petersburg. Kline provides vivid details of marches, fighting, and long stints in the trenches at Petersburg. In a letter of 22 June 1864, written from near Point of Rocks, Virginia, Kline writes that President Abraham Lincoln, General Benjamin F. Butler, and his staff passed through their camp inspecting their fortifications. Kline described Lincoln as "ordinary looking."

On 29 September 1864, Kline was wounded while making an assault on Fort Gilmer near the James River. In a letter of 1 October 1864, an unnamed individual at the United States General Hospital, Fort Monroe, Virginia, wrote to Kline's mother about his injury. The letter stated that Kline had been hit by a minié ball in the right elbow, and the injury was so severe that his arm had to be amputated. Letters from October 1864 to January 1865 contain three letters from Kline, but most are from individuals writing on his behalf while he recovered at Hampton Hospital in Virginia.

The papers also contain photocopies of government documents relating to Kline's pension, an undated drawing by Kline, a loose envelope, and a copy of a photograph of Kline when he served as chief of police in Amsterdam, New York. The original photograph was retained by his family.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by type of material.

## Container List

<b>Container</b>	<b>Contents</b>
BOX 1	Correspondence
BOX 1	Originals
BOX 1	1862-1863 (12 folders)
BOX 1	1864
BOX 1	Jan.-July (5 folders)
BOX 2	Aug.-Dec. (4 folders)
BOX 2	1865
BOX 2	Transcripts, 1862 (2 folders)
BOX 2	Loose envelope, 1863
BOX 2	Pension documents, 1865-1866, 1903-1907
BOX 2	Photograph (copy) and drawing, undated