

**Esther Hill Hawks Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2016**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79025304>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/eadmss.ms016033>

Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2016  
Revised 2021 January

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Esther Hill Hawks Papers

**Span Dates:** 1856-1867

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1861-1867)

**ID No.:** MSS25304

**Creator:** Hawks, Esther Hill, 1833-1906

**Extent:** 515 items

**Extent:** 1 container

**Extent:** .4 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79025304>

**Summary:** Physician, educator, and abolitionist. Correspondence and other papers relating to the work of Hawks and her husband caring for sick and wounded soldiers, including African Americans, in South Carolina during the Civil War, and as a teacher of African Americans in South Carolina and Florida during the Civil War and Reconstruction era.

## 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

Hawks, Esther Hill, 1833-1906.

Hawks, J. M. (John Milton), 1826-1910--Correspondence.

Hawks, J. M. (John Milton), 1826-1910.

Hill, Edward O., 1843-1917--Correspondence.

Hill, Sylvester J., 1836-1910--Correspondence.

Hill, Warren S., 1839-1914--Correspondence.

Saxton, Rufus, 1824-1908--Correspondence.

### Organizations

National Freedman's Relief Association--Correspondence.

United States. Army--Military life.

United States. Army. New Hampshire Infantry Regiment, 4th (1861-1865)

United States. Army. New Hampshire Infantry Regiment, 9th (1862-1865)

United States. Army. South Carolina Volunteers, 1st (1862-1864)

United States. Army. South Carolina Volunteers, 3rd (1863-1864)

### Subjects

African Americans--Education--Florida.

African Americans--Education--South Carolina.

African Americans--Florida.

African Americans--South Carolina.

Education--Florida.

Education--South Carolina.

Freedmen--Education--Florida.

Freedmen--Education--South Carolina.

Freedmen--Florida.

Freedmen--South Carolina.

Freedmen.

Port Royal (S.C.) Expedition, 1861.

Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)--Florida.

Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)--South Carolina.

## Places

Beaufort (S.C.)--History.  
Fernandina (Fla.)--History.  
Florida--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Jacksonville (Fla.)--History.  
New Hampshire--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Saint Augustine (Fla.)--History.  
South Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--African Americans.  
South Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Hospitals.  
South Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Medical care.  
South Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--African Americans.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Campaigns.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Medical care.

## Occupations

Abolitionists.  
Educators.  
Physicians.

## Provenance

The papers of Esther Hill Hawks, physician, educator, and abolitionist, were purchased by the Library of Congress in 1910.

## Processing History

The Hawks Papers were processed and bound by the Library of Congress after being obtained in 1910. The finding aid was created in 2016.

## Additional Guides

The Hawks Papers are described in the Library's *Handbook of Manuscripts* (Washington, D.C., 1918): 164; and in *Civil War Manuscripts: A Guide to Collections in the Manuscript Division* (Washington, D.C., 1986): 116.

## Copyright Status

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

## Access and Restrictions

The papers of Esther Hill Hawks 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, Esther Hill Hawks Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
1833, Aug. 5	Born Esther Hill, Hooksett, N.H.
1854	Married John Milton Hawks
1857	Received medical degree, New England Female Medical College, Boston, Mass.
1862	Volunteered as teacher for New York Freedman's Society, National Freedman's Relief Association, Beaufort, S.C., educating soldiers of the First Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers
1863	As physician, treated African-American soldiers and families, including members of the 54th Regiment, Massachusetts Colored Infantry, Beaufort, S.C.
circa 1865-1869	Established and taught integrated school at Jacksonville, Fla.
1870	Returned to New England to practice medicine
1906, May 6	Died, Lynn, Mass.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Esther Hill Hawks (1833-1906) span the years 1856-1876, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1861-1867. Hawks was a medical doctor who with her husband, also a doctor, treated African-American soldiers during the Civil War and taught at Freedmen's schools in South Carolina and Florida. The collection consists chiefly of letters to Hawks, 1862-1863, from her husband, John Milton Hawks; brothers Edward O. Hill (New Hampshire Volunteers, 4th Regiment) Warren S. Hill, and Sylvester J. Hill (New Hampshire Volunteers, Ninth Regiment); and convalescent soldiers in hospitals at Beaufort, South Carolina. Correspondence from J. M. Hawks discusses his work with freedmen, African-American life, and the progress of the war in South Carolina. Letters from the Hill brothers concern the Port Royal expedition, the occupation of Jacksonville, Fernandina, and St. Augustine, Florida, and camp life. There is also correspondence between Esther Hawks and members of the National Freedmen's Relief Association, and from Rufus Saxton, military governor of the Department of the South. Additional material includes returns for the 1st and 3rd South Carolina Volunteers, schools records, including names of African-American students taught by Hawks, and military passes.

## Arrangement of the Papers

The papers are organized chronologically in two bound volumes.

## Container List

<b>Container</b>	<b>Contents</b>
BOX 1	Vol. 1, 1856, Jan. 14-1863, Dec. 12
BOX 1	Vol. 2, 1863, Dec. 13-1874, Dec. 13