

## Archives &amp; Special Collections

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## Andrew McConnell Collection

**Call Number:** MS-12

**Name:** An Inventory of the Lieutenant Andrew McConnell Diary, held in the Valdosta State University Archives.

**Dates:** 1861-1865

**Size:** 1 box; 2 items

### Biography:

Andrew Jackson McConnell, Jr. (Feb. 14, 1838 – July 30, 1864) was the son of Andrew Jackson and Elizabeth Dawkins McConnell. He was one of seven children in the family. The McConnell home was in Northwestern Fairfield County, South Carolina. McConnell lived in a house on land he inherited from his father when he died in 1855. He also farmed the inherited land. In 1857, he married Sally Amanda Coleman. They lost an infant. McConnell was involved in the military training company, called the Buckhead Guards, with a number of men from upper Fairfield County. When the Civil War broke out, he enlisted with the South Carolina Volunteers in Company D, 17th Regiment. He witnessed the bombardment of Fort Sumter, the aftermath of the Battle of First Manassas, was wounded at the Battle of Second Manassas, and was deployed near Vicksburg shortly before it fell. He was killed at the Battle of Petersburg on July 30, 1864. He was initially buried near the battlefield, but was eventually sent back to Fairfield County, where he was buried next to his wife and child in Coleman graveyard. Immediately following his death, his brother-in-law, John Albert Feaster Coleman began writing in McConnell's diary until the end of the war.

### Scope and Content:

The diary was written in pocket-sized editions and each was sent home after it was completed. The collection in the Valdosta State Archives has two folders, each containing an identical copy of the McConnell diary. The diary is divided into five volumes, the last of which was written by John Albert Feaster Coleman after McConnell died. Kathleen and Mary Bess Coleman and Julia and Mary

Faucette owned four of the original volumes of the diary. Donald Clayton owned one book, which he found in the attic of the old Jacob Feaster house. The five volumes of the diary each contain different types of information.

Volume 1: This includes the very first writings of McConnell's diary. It begins at Fort Pickens on May 8, 1861. It has descriptions of furloughs home as well as the time he spent at Camp Woodward, Wilmington, and Weldon. McConnell also writes of going to Petersburg for the first time, followed by Richmond. After Richmond, he arrived around Manassas just after the Battle of First Manassas had been fought. He describes the carnage and the number of wounded men he witnessed after he stepped foot on his first battlefield. This volume contains McConnell's first impression of military life, as well as his observations on day-to-day activities and the interactions of the troops. He also writes a good deal about his personal life, such as his romantic relationship with Susan Arnett. His last entry into this volume is on August 16, 1861 at Camp Petters.

Volume 2: This volume begins on December 5, 1862. There is no explanation for the large amount of time that was not documented. During that time, McConnell was wounded at the Battle of Second Manassas. He was also sent home after his term of service was over, only to reenlist shortly afterwards. At the beginning of volume two, McConnell is traveling from home to Camp Hagood, near Kinston, NC, where Confederate forces engaged the enemy shortly afterward. He also witnessed an engagement at Falling Creek. As McConnell traveled to many different camps located around North Carolina, it is easy to see that he matured as a soldier a great deal since his last installment. He also writes of his experiences during the arrest of Colonel McMaster by General Evans. This volume ends at Camp Benbo on March 3, 1863.

Volume 3: This volume begins at Camp Benbo on March 4, 1863. McConnell camped in various parts of North and South Carolina, and went home on furlough before learning that his unit was to travel to Mississippi to assist in the defense of Vicksburg. When he left for Vicksburg, he traveled through Augusta and West Point, GA. He then entered Alabama and traveled through Montgomery and Selma. He finally arrived at Demopolis and then disembarked in Meridian, Mississippi. While traveling to Mississippi, McConnell commented on the positive receptions he got from the people of Georgia and Alabama, as well as the good farmland. He spent most of his time in Mississippi camped around Jackson, and though he did not enter Vicksburg, he was involved in the defense of Jackson. This volume ends at Camp "Poison Oak" on July 31, 1863.

Volume 4: This volume begins at Secessionville, SC on November 8, 1863. He goes to Fort Sumter two days after this volume begins, and is shelled by the enemy on the way there. McConnell describes the destruction and carnage that had taken place at Fort Sumter. He provides day-by-day

accounts of the continuous shelling on the Fort, and gives then number of shells that were fired each day, and the number that hit or missed. He returned to Secessionville, where he received news of General Bragg falling back to Chickamauga, GA. He traveled to Sullivan's Island, and from there, he went home on furlough. He came back to Sullivan's Island and celebrated his 26th birthday. He eventually ended up in Green Pond, SC, where this volume ends on April 1, 1864.

Volume 5: This volume begins on July 31, 1864, the day after McConnell was killed. It is written by John Albert Feaster Coleman, his brother-in-law, who served close to McConnell throughout the war. It begins in the trenches around Petersburg, VA. Coleman reports heavy fighting that takes place sporadically around the area. He also expresses his reactions to hearing the news of the fall of Atlanta, the re-election of President Lincoln, and the besieging of Savannah. He goes home on a 21-day furlough and arrives back at camp on January 18, 1865. After being sick for nine days, he hears news of General Sherman capturing Columbia, SC. This causes him anxiety over his family, and the fact is exaggerated because he is not able to receive any communication from his family. He went into battle around Petersburg on March 25, 1865, and ends up in full retreat toward Lynchburg on April 2, 1865. He also mentions the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House. He arrived home on April, 22, 1865 to find his family intact.

### **Subject Headings:**

Andrew McConnell, Jr.

John A.F. Coleman

Buckhead Guards

South Carolina Volunteers

Fort Sumter

General Dunnoyant

Camp Woodward

Summerville

Petersburg

Richmond

First Manassas

Second Manassas

General Beauregard

Camp Petters

Camp Hagood

Fort Pickens

Kinston

Falling Creek

Colonel F.W. McMaster

General Evans

Battle of Tull's Field

General Feaster

Fort Magruder

Camp Kershaw

Camp Benbo

Camp Whitney

Camp Whiting

Camp Jenkins