

Vlack, Alonzo Van

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit February 20, 2015

English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

University Libraries Division of Special Collections, The University of
Alabama February 2015

Box 870266

Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 35487-0266

205.348.0500

archives@ua.edu

Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical/Historical note	3
Scope and Contents note	4
Administrative Information	4
Controlled Access Headings	5
Collection Inventory	5

Summary Information

Repository: University Libraries Division of Special Collections, The University of Alabama

Creator: Vlack, Alonzo Van

Title: Alonzo Van Vlack papers

ID: MSS.0166

Date: 1864-1865

Physical Description: 0.05 Linear feet

Language of the Material: English

Abstract: Typed transcripts and one handwritten letter from a Union soldier to his parents while he was a prisoner of war at Cahaba Prison in Dallas County, Alabama, and at a parole camp near Vicksburg, Mississippi. There are also typed transcriptions of manuscripts describing prison life and the explosion of the Steamer *Sultana*.

Preferred Citation note

Alonzo Van Vlack papers, University Libraries Division of Special Collections, The University of Alabama

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical/Historical note

Alonzo A. Van Vlack, oldest son of Edmund and Sarah Van Vlack, was born in Hillsdale, Michigan, on October 8, 1843. He enlisted in Company F of the Eighteenth Michigan Infantry Regiment on August 5, 1862. He was captured on September 24, 1864, at Athens, Alabama, and spent approximately six months in the Confederate prison in Cahawba, Alabama. He was paroled in March 1865, and moved to Vicksburg. There he was exchanged and was aboard the Steamer *Sultana*, headed up the Mississippi when, around 2:00am on April 27, 1865, the steamer exploded just north of Memphis, killing approximately 1,500 men. In the last letter to his parents, written in Ohio and dated May 12, 1865, he tells them that he should be in Woodbridge (Michigan) in two weeks "if Nothing Happens."

After his return to Michigan, he married Louisa E. Divine on July 4, 1866. The couple had one daughter, Sarah Adelia. Van Vlack died on April 8, 1896.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents note

The collection contains typed transcripts of a description of prison life by Alonzo Van Vlack, a Union soldier captured near Athens, Alabama, on September 24, 1864. Besides the five typed copies of letters to his parents in Michigan, written from the parole camp near Vicksburg, there is also one handwritten letter dated December 16, 1864, while he was a prisoner of war at Cahaba Prison in Dallas County, Alabama. [The originals of the typed transcripts are held by Bentley Library, University of Michigan.]

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

University Libraries Division of Special Collections, The University of Alabama February 2015

Box 870266
Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 35487-0266
205.348.0500
archives@ua.edu

Provenance

Gift of Jack C. Northrup, 1992; additional gift, 2004

Processed by

updated by Andrew Harris, 2012; updated by Martha Bace, 2015

Conditions Governing Access note

None

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Northrup, Jack C.
- Dallas County (Ala.)
- Letters (correspondence)
- United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865
- United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Prisoners and Prisons
- War and Military

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances
Papers	Box 3577