



The Historical
Society of
Pennsylvania

Collection 1580

**Samuel B. Fales collection of Union Volunteer
Refreshment Saloon papers**

**1861-1886 (bulk 1861-1865)
22 boxes, 14 volumes, 9 linear feet**

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**Related Collections at
HSP:** Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon
(Collection 2074)

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Abstract

Bills, receipts, correspondence, and newspaper clippings present a comprehensive view of the activities of the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, 1861-1865. This organization cared for thousands of Union soldiers as they passed through Philadelphia, and the papers and books name many of those so helped. The hospital books, 1861-1865, in particular, give the name, regiment, and home of each man treated. Another book gives names and addresses of Southerners separated from their families. Other books list donations and subscriptions.

Background note

In South Philadelphia, at the corner of Washington Avenue and Swanson Street, a neighborhood grocer named Barzilai Brown began distributing food to soldiers traveling to and from the nearby Navy Yard and railroads. This operation, originally referred to as "Brown's," became the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon on May 27, 1861. Samuel B. Fales was the Corresponding Secretary of the saloon.

The establishment grew and became a place of rest, relaxation, and, of course, refreshment for travel-weary soldiers, whom the saloon provided with food, drink, paper, and stamps. Troops stopping at the saloon were also given travel directions, names of army officials and contacts, and places of local interest. In September 1861 a hospital was added to better accommodate sick and wounded soldiers.

The saloon received donations of food, clothing, and money. In 1863 a captured Confederate naval vessel, "Ram," was lent to the saloon. The admission fees gathered from those viewing the boat were applied to the saloon and helped with the upkeep and growth of the hospital and other facilities.

The Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon closed in late 1865. In the course of its operation it aided thousands of Union troops and provided them with food, clothing, and medical attention. The establishment was able to unite the neighborhood and the city behind a common cause and provided relief to many during a time of great need.

Scope & content

The Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon epitomizes the civilian-led relief organizations of the Civil War. The saloon was begun by a group of private volunteers and sustained itself for the duration of the war by relying on donations and its own enterprises. It never received any government aid. This collection includes items that attest to the importance of the saloon and its efforts to aid not only soldiers, but their families.

The Samuel B. Fales Collection is an eclectic group of papers and ephemera documenting the internal workings, as well as public perceptions, of the saloon. As Corresponding Secretary, Fales was directly involved in the daily routine of the saloon. Most of the correspondence in the collection was neither sent to nor written by him, yet it reflects the business of the saloon through the papers of other board members and correspondence pertaining to events, functions, donations, and goods ordered. Invoices list items purchased from merchants, grocers, butchers, and tailors, to name a few.

Dated internal forms and memoranda provide listings of regiments that passed through. The most detailed records of the soldiers who stopped at the saloon exist in the hospital records, which describe illnesses, wounds, and treatments given to the soldiers there. Names, birthplaces, and ages of the troops are often listed. Some correspondence relates to soldiers that died while at the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon; many relatives and friends thank the saloon for the care given to the soldiers and for helping them arrange for the men's bodies to arrive home. These letters offer the most sincere testament to the important and indispensable role that the saloon filled with efficiency and careful attention. There are also thank-you notes from soldiers who were grateful for the food and welcome that they received at the saloon.

The financial records of the saloon are not an extensive part of the collection. Nevertheless, letters regarding contributions, cash books, and invoices provide an overview of the saloon's financial situation.

The bulk of the collection is miscellaneous material. Newspaper clippings relating to the saloon describe its activities and indicate public (and media) perceptions of it. Printed materials that were given to the soldiers to the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon demonstrate the care and attention that was given to the soldiers and provide insights into what soldiers may have expected when visiting the saloon. Tickets for the saloon's activities are evidence of its attempts to engage the soldiers and the community in its cause, and items pertaining to the history of the saloon, though not detailed, describe rules, regulations, and basic operations. There are also some items describing the history of the Cooper Shop Refreshment Saloon, a similar organization.

In addition, there are some items pertaining to the United States Sanitary Commission and the Great Central Fair. Sanitary Commission items offer limited insights into the working relationship fostered between it and the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon.

Some of Fales's personal ephemera and correspondence is included in the collection. His postwar activities at the Union League and his affiliation with other patriotic

organizations is documented in a rudimentary fashion, and these papers include Fales's endeavors to locate art depicting Civil War subjects and some papers (mostly printed material) pertaining to the creation of a Lincoln monument.

The Samuel B. Fales Collection provides significant insight into Civil War civilian relief organizations. Although the collection is eclectic and comprised largely of small bits of miscellaneous material involving many different people and activities, by piecing together the many different types of documents that exist in the collection it is possible to trace the basic operations of the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon and describe its evolution from a place that provided a hot meal to a hospital and sanctuary, and eventually, a social services site for soldiers and their families that helped them to procure transportation, employment, and a sympathetic respite from the hardships of war.

Overview of arrangement

Series I	Correspondence, 1861-1886	3 boxes
Series II	Invoices, 1861-1866	7 boxes
Series III	Special Files, 1861-1865	2 boxes
Series IV	Records of Troops, 1863-1865	1 box
Series V	Miscellaneous, 1861-1882	9 boxes
	a. Ephemera and Miscellaneous	
	b. Printed Material	
	c. Items Removed from Volumes	
Series VI	Volumes, 1861-1882	13 volumes

Series description

Series 1. Correspondence, 1861-1886 (Boxes 1-3)

The correspondence of Samuel Fales is a mixture of incoming and outgoing letters. There are also many items not addressed to or written by Fales.

Correspondence of the war years includes letters regarding donations and items relating to the daily business of the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon. Some items are difficult to identify and seem to be letters that Fales came across and collected during the course of his duties with the saloon.

Postwar correspondence includes letters to former associates, letters to Fales from family, friends, and business acquaintances, and some correspondence pertaining to Fales's involvement in the Union League.

Series 2. Invoices, 1861-1866 (Boxes 4-10)

Receipts and invoices pertaining to the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon provide information about what types of goods were being purchased, who was purchasing them, and from whom they received their supplies.

Series 3. Special Files, 1861-1865 (Boxes 11-12)

Items pertaining to soldiers treated at the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, including letters of thanks from soldiers and their families, are included in this series. There are also items relating to contributions received by the saloon and papers that document the relationship of the U.S. Sanitary Commission and the saloon. There are some items concerning the Great Central Fair.

There are some items that describe in limited detail the history of the saloon and some of its activities, including information about the “Ram,” a captured Confederate boat lent to the saloon so that they could raise some additional funds.

Some items pertain to Edward Moran, an artist who completed several paintings of the Union Volunteer Refreshment saloon.

Of some special interest, although not related to the workings of the saloon, is a General Order (15 June 1863) from J.E.B. Stuart congratulating the Confederate army on their recent victory at Fleetwood, where the northern troops learned the “weight of Southern vengeance.”

Series 4. Records of Troops, 1863-1865 (Box 13)

Forms used by the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon list the regiment (when applicable), the number of men arrived or expected, and sometimes list hospital admittances and discharges.

Hospital records list the date, the names of soldiers treated, their ages, and what they were treated for. Other remarks are occasionally added. Hospital discharge records indicate soldiers’ names, ranks, and regiments. Other papers include letters from regiments requesting information about soldiers who were being treated at the saloon’s hospital and some documents and notes pertaining to the activities of the hospital.

Series 5. Miscellaneous, 1861-1882 (Boxes 14-22)

Ephemera and Miscellaneous includes some personal papers and account information of Samuel B. Fales, tickets, menus, and other ephemera from the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon and some other Philadelphia organizations. Some papers relate to the acquisition of artwork, mostly portraying subjects relating to the Civil War. There are also some photographs, which are not identified. There is one box of envelopes and wrappers that had been separated from their original contents.

Printed Materials contains newspaper clippings, blank Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon forms, circulars, letterhead, items pertaining to the history of the Cooper Shop refreshment saloon, also in Philadelphia, and materials that were passed out to the soldiers in the Philadelphia saloon. There are multiple copies of many items in this subseries.

Items Removed from Volumes contains printed material, clippings, notes, and some correspondence. Some items are difficult to identify, and most notes do not appear to be of much significance, but clippings and correspondence may offer insights.

Series 6. Volumes, 1861-1882 (13 volumes)

Volumes contain account information regarding cash flow, orders made, and donations received by the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon. Hospital books list the names, ranks, ages, and ailments of soldiers treated there, with additional remarks when necessary.

Related materials

Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon (Collection 2074).

References

Taylor, Frank. *Philadelphia in the Civil War, 1861-1865*. Philadelphia, 1913.

Subjects

Relief Societies—Philadelphia—19th century
Soldiers—Recreation. Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon
United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Hospitals
United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Printed Materials
United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—War work
United States Sanitary Commission
United States Sanitary Commission – Great Central Fair

Moran, Edward, 1829-1901

Cooper Shop Refreshment Saloon
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon and Hospital (Philadelphia, Pa.)

Administrative Information

Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Acquisition information

Gift of Samuel B. Fales.

Alternative format

None.

Preferred citation

Cite as: [Indicate cited item or series here], Samuel B. Fales collection of Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon papers (Collection 1580), The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Processing note

This collection was approached in January 2001 as part of an EAD encoding project. At that time, the papers were already organized into series. Some subseries were created in order to further organize the collection. In particular, the *Miscellaneous* series required further organization. A folder-level inventory was also created in order to better identify the contents of the collection.

Box and folder listing

Series 1. Correspondence

Folder title	Date	Box	Folder(s)
Correspondence	1861-December 1863	1	1-9
Correspondence	January 1864- December 1865	2	1-8
Correspondence	1866-1880, 1882, 1886, undated	3	1-7

Series 2. Invoices

Folder title	Date	Box	Folder(s)
Invoices	June-October 1861, undated	4	1-6
Invoices	November-December 1861	5	1-2
Invoices	January-August 1862	6	1-8
Invoices	September-December 1862	7	1-4
Invoices	January-December 1863	8	1-12
Invoices	January-December 1864, 1865	9	1-13
Invoices	January-December 1865, 1866	10	1-13

Series 3. Special Files

Folder title	Box	Folder
Letters regarding sending corpses	11	1
U.S. Sanitary Commission	11	2
Reports on troop arrivals	11	3
Appeals for contributions	11	4
Requests for assistance	11	5
Letters regarding donations	11	6
Letters of thanks	11	7
Deceased soldiers	11	8

Request for marble memorial column	11	9
“The Fair Record”	12	1
J.E.B. Stuart	12	2
Rebel Ram Exhibition	12	3
Edward Moran papers	12	4
Certified partial history	12	5
Reports of the Union Volunteer Refreshment Committee	12	6
History of Cooper saloon	12	7
Rules and regulations	12	8
Great Central Fair	12	9
Miscellaneous	12	10

Series 4. Records of Troops Served

Folder title	Date	Box	Folder
Troop lists	1863-1865	13	1
Squad lists	1864-1865	13	2
Soldiers’ hospitalization records		13	3
Hospital: discharges, arrivals		13	4

Series 5. Miscellaneous a. Ephemera and Miscellany

Folder title	Box	Folder
Ephemera	14	1
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon Ephemera	14	2
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon Ephemera	14	3
33 star flag	14	4
Descriptions of art topics	14	5
Lincoln statue	14	6
Photos	14	7
Fales: personal papers and accounts	14	8
Miscellaneous notebooks and account books [15 items]	14	
Envelopes and Wrappers	15	

Series 5. Miscellaneous b. Printed Materials

Folder title	Date	Box	Folder(s)
Clippings	1861-1880	16	1-7
Miscellaneous printed material		16	8
Pamphlets		16	9
<i>History of the Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloon</i> , by James Moore. (Phila., 1866.)	1866	16	
Clippings (duplicate)		17	
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon: Blank Forms	1862	18	1
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon: Circular letter re: "Rebel Deserters"	17 May 1865	18	2
"Descent of the Eagle"	1865	18	3
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon: Resolutions adopted after the assassination of Lincoln	1865	18	4
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon: Misc. form letters and forms		18	5
Blank Telegraph Forms		18	6
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon: Blank Thank-You forms		18	7
National Union Club: Articles of Association		18	8
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon: Blank Contribution Forms		18	9
Union League of Phila.: Preamble and Resolutions		18	10
"The Fair Record"		18	11
Blank Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon envelopes		19	
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon: Misc. Tickets		19	
Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon: Refreshment tickets		19	
Hospital Cards		19	
List of Contributors		19	
Letterhead		19	
Welcome Cards		19	
Soldiers' Time Tables		19	

“With the Compliments of the Union Volunteer Refreshment Committee		19	
“List of Officers of the 28 th Regiment Penna. Veteran Vols.”		19	
Soldiers’ Guides		20	
“History of the Rebel Steam Ram”		20	
“Lines in Memory of the Philadelphia Volunteer Refreshment Saloon”		21	1
“The Descent of the Eagle”		21	2
Blank receipts		21	3
Blank telegrams and letterhead		21	4
Portraits of Samuel Fales, photos		21	5

Series 5. Miscellaneous c. Items Removed from Volumes

Folder title	Box	Folder
From volume 1	22	1
From volume 2	22	2
From volume 3	22	3
From volume 4	22	4
From volume 5	22	5
From volume 6	22	6
From volume 7	22	7
From volume 9	22	8
From volume 10	22	9
From volume 11	22	10
From volumes 8 & 12	22	11

Series 6. Volumes

Volume #	Description	Date
1	Cash book	1861-1862
2	Cash book	1862-1864
3	Cash book	1861-1865
4	Checkbook	1865
5	Donations	1862
6	Donations	1861-1865
7	Independence Hall Committee Subscriptions	July-Sept. 1862
8	List of Contributors	n.d.

9	Hospital book	1862
10	Hospital book	1862-1865
11	Notes on refugees, deserters, employment	1864-1865
12	Scrapbook	1861-1865
13	Blank diary with clippings laid in	1882