

The Lewis H. Brown Collection  
Scope and Content  
Randall Miles  
2002

The Lewis H. Brown Collection of Civil War Letters consists of sixty-four letters written on fifty-eight sheets of paper, along with seven envelopes, and ancillary materials. Two of the letters take up two sheets of paper each, while four of the sheets contain two letters and two of the sheets contain three letters. The majority, fifty-six, of the letters were written by Lewis Henry Brown while he was a corporal in Company D of the 27<sup>th</sup> New York Regiment of Volunteer Infantry, the "Union Regiment." One was written by Lewis Brown while he was an officer in the 1<sup>st</sup> New York Regiment of Cavalry (Veteran). Six of the letters were written by Lewis' brother Burritt Brown. The remaining letter was written by Burritt Brown's friend and tent-mate, Al Ransom. Only one of the seven envelopes is directly associated with a letter; a second envelope is tentatively associated with a letter. The letters range in date from July 23, 1861 to June 27, 1863; with the letters from Burritt Brown and Al Ransom clustered in April, May, and June, 1863. In response to these natural parameters the letters are arranged in chronological order. The three exceptions to this rule are two from Burritt Brown, for which only the year could be determined, and one from Lewis Brown, for which no date at all could be determined. The unassociated envelopes are at the end of the collection, arranged alphabetically by name of recipient.

Each letter was unfolded and placed in a mylar sleeve, such that all pages may be read without removing the letter from the sleeve. Each letter, in its mylar sleeve, was then placed in an acid-free folder. The envelopes have also been placed in mylar sleeves. Where a letter and an envelope were matched the mylar sleeves containing the items are both in the same acid-free folder. Also included in the folder with each letter is a description of the physical condition of the letter at the time of transcription and a copy of the transcription. The letters are followed in the collection by one acid-free folder containing the empty envelopes, each in a separate mylar sleeve. The ancillary materials are housed in a separate archival box. A single acid-free folder holds the 'scope and

content note,' the 'finding aid,' and the 'transcription note.' Photocopies from the National Archives and Records Administration of the Military Service Records and Military Pension Records for Lewis H. Brown, Burrirt Brown, and Albert Ransom are in separate acid-free folders. The collection is in sixty-seven folders in one 410 cubic inch and three 810 cubic inch archival boxes, for a total of 2840 cubic inches.

### The Letters

Lewis Henry Brown, a native of Binghamton, NY, area served in the Union Army during the Civil War. Part of his service was as an enlisted man, or private soldier as they were then known, in the 27<sup>th</sup> New York Regiment of Volunteer Infantry. After the 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry was mustered out on 31 May 1863 Brown volunteered again. His last months of service were as an officer in the 1<sup>st</sup> New York Regiment of Cavalry (Veteran). His letters home to his family, along with those of his brother Burrirt and friend Al Ransom, cover the war from the beginning to the end. The first letter in the collection was written on 23 July 1861, just two days after the first land battle of war, the First Battle of Bull Run. The last letter was written from Camp Piatt, West Virginia on 19 May 1865, only three weeks prior to the post-war demobilization of the 1<sup>st</sup> Veteran Cavalry on 07 June 1865.

Of the sixty-four letters in the Lewis Brown Collection fifty-seven were written by Lewis Brown. Six were written by his brother Burrirt Brown and one was written by one of Burrirt's tent mates, Al Ransom. The recipients of the letters were Lewis and Burrirt's immediate family: their parents, Alfred N. and Mary E. Brown; their sisters Ellen and Nettie; three of the Brown brothers, Burrirt, Willard, and Merritt; and Lewis' nephew or cousin, Merritt Roe.

Lewis Brown wrote letters on whatever paper came to hand. Some were written on stationery, some on notebook pages, and some on scrap paper. Lewis was frugal in his use of paper. Several of the sheets have two or three letters written on them, each to a different person. Also Lewis would write in the margins when he reached the end of the sheet before the end of the letter. Many letters end by going up the right margin, and some continue by going upside-down across the top and back down the left margin. Short passages were also nestled into corners of sheets.

The physical condition of Lewis Brown's letters is generally good. While almost all show some evidence of foxing and fading, both are usually slight, and the foxing tends to be confined to the creases. Only two can be characterized as heavily foxed and none are badly faded. Nine of Lewis' letter-sheets are torn, mostly small tears along the creases. Some others show evidence of having been cut. A little more than half the sheets, twenty-five out of forty-nine, have holes, but only five of those have holes of a significant size. Eighteen of the sheets are stained. Another ten sheets have yellowed, probably from exposure to light.

Burritt Brown also used whatever paper came to hand: one of his letters appears to be written on the back of a scrap of what appears to be wallpaper. Unlike his brother, Lewis, Burritt wrote only one letter per sheet of paper. He did, though, utilize the space in the margins to squeeze in his final words.

Burritt Brown's letters are in good physical condition, in some ways better than Lewis'. Of Burritt's six letters all display slight foxing, though only one has a stain. As with Lewis' letters the foxing is confined to the creases. Two of Burritt's letters are very faded and the rest are slightly to moderately faded. Half are torn and half have holes, leaving only two that completely intact.

Albert Ransom's one letter is in fair condition. It is not torn, but is moderately foxed and stained along the creases. The ink has slightly faded. There are also several moderately sized holes in the vertical crease.

### The Envelopes

There are seven envelopes in the Lewis H. Brown Collection. One is matched to a letter and is housed with that letter. Of the other six, one is tentatively associated with a letter. That association is noted in the description of the envelope. For the other five envelopes no association could be determined. These six envelopes are housed together in an acid-free folder at the end of the collection. At some point the stamps were removed, either by cutting or tearing, from the envelopes. Five of the seven envelopes are illustrated.

# *Lewis H. Brown Collection of Civil War Letters*

<i>Box #</i>	<i>Folder #</i>	<i>Item #</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>LB01</b>					
	<i>LB01</i>	Envelope			
		LBE01	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	24 July 1861
		Letter			
		LBL01	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	23 July 1861
	<i>LB02</i>	Letter			
		LBL02	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	27 July 1861
		LBL03	Lewis Henry Brown	Mary E. Brown	28 July 1861
		LBL04	Lewis Henry Brown	Nettie Brown	28 July 1861
	<i>LB03</i>	Letter			
		LBL05	Lewis Henry Brown	"Sister" Brown	3 August 1861
		LBL06	Lewis Henry Brown	"Brother" Brown	3 August 1861
	<i>LB04</i>	Letter			
		LBL07	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	12 August 1861
	<i>LB05</i>	Letter			
		LBL08	Lewis Henry Brown	"Sister" Brown	7 September 1861
	<i>LB06</i>	Letter			
		LBL09	Lewis Henry Brown	Mary E. Brown	8 September 1861
	<i>LB07</i>	Letter			
		LBL10	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	8 September 1861
	<i>LB08</i>	Letter			
		LBL11	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	13 September [1861]
	<i>LB09</i>	Letter			
		LBL12	Lewis Henry Brown	Willard Brown	21 September [1861]
		LBL13	Lewis Henry Brown	Merritt Brown	21 September [1861]
		LBL14	Lewis Henry Brown	Merritt Roe	21 September [1861]
	<i>LB10</i>	Letter			
		LBL15	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	24 September 1861
	<i>LB11</i>	Letter			
		LBL16	Lewis Henry Brown	"Brother" Brown	4 October 1861

<i>Box #</i>	<i>Folder #</i>	<i>Item #</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>LB01</b>					
	<i>LB12</i>	Letter LBL17	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	7 October 1861
	<i>LB13</i>	Letter LBL18	Lewis Henry Brown	Ellen Brown	9 October 1861
	<i>LB14</i>	Letter LBL19	Lewis Henry Brown	Willard Brown	22 October 1861
		Letter LBL20	Lewis Henry Brown	Merritt Brown	22 October 1861
	<i>LB15</i>	Letter LBL21	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	25 October [1861]
		Letter LBL22	Lewis Henry Brown	Mary E. Brown	26 October [1861]
	<i>LB16</i>	Letter LBL23	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	1 November 1861
	<i>LB17</i>	Letter LBL24	Lewis Henry Brown	[Unknown]	14 November [1861]
	<i>LB18</i>	Letter LBL25	Lewis Henry Brown	[Unknown]	15 November [1861]
	<i>LB19</i>	Letter LBL26	Lewis Henry Brown	Nettie Brown	19 November [1861]
<b>LB02</b>					
	<i>LB20</i>	Letter LBL27	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	21 November 1861
	<i>LB21</i>	Letter LBL28	Lewis Henry Brown	Ellen Brown	27 November 1861
	<i>LB22</i>	Letter LBL29	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	9 December 1861
	<i>LB23</i>	Letter LBL30	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	11 December 1861
	<i>LB24</i>	Letter LBL31	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	No Date 1861
	<i>LB25</i>	Letter LBL32	Lewis Henry Brown	Nettie Brown	3 January 1862
	<i>LB26</i>	Letter LBL33	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	8 January 1862

<i>Box #</i>	<i>Folder #</i>	<i>Item #</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>LB02</b>					
	<i>LB27</i>	Letter LBL34	Lewis Henry Brown	"Brother" Brown	9 January 1862
	<i>LB28</i>	Letter LBL35	Lewis Henry Brown	Merritt Roe	23 February 1862
	<i>LB29</i>	Letter LBL36	Lewis Henry Brown	Mary E. Brown	24 February 1862
	<i>LB30</i>	Letter LBL37	Lewis Henry Brown	Nettie Brown	5 March 1862
	<i>LB31</i>	Letter LBL38	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	10 March 1862
	<i>LB32</i>	Letter LBL39	Lewis Henry Brown	"Brother" Brown	12 April 1862
	<i>LB33</i>	Letter LBL40	Lewis Henry Brown	"Brother" Brown	19 April 1862
	<i>LB34</i>	Letter LBL41	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	26 April 1862
	<i>LB35</i>	Letter LBL42	Lewis Henry Brown	"Brother" Brown	8 May 1862
	<i>LB36</i>	Letter LBL43	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	27 May 1862
		LBL44	Lewis Henry Brown	Merritt Brown	28 May 1862
	<i>LB37</i>	Letter LBL45	Lewis Henry Brown	Mary E. Brown	29 May 1862
	<i>LB38</i>	Letter LBL46	Lewis Henry Brown	Ellen Brown	12 June 1862
<b>LB03</b>					
	<i>LB39</i>	Letter LBL47	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	29 July 1862
	<i>LB40</i>	Letter LBL48	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred and Mary Brown	15 September 1862
	<i>LB41</i>	Letter LBL49	Lewis Henry Brown	Merritt Brown	19 September 1862
	<i>LB42</i>	Letter LBL50	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred and Mary Brown	8 October 1862

<i>Box #</i>	<i>Folder #</i>	<i>Item #</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>LB03</b>					
	<i>LB43</i>	Letter LBL51	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	14 October 1862
	<i>LB44</i>	Letter LBL52	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	7 November 1862
	<i>LB45</i>	Letter LBL53	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	27 December 1862
	<i>LB46</i>	Letter LBL54	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	26 February 1863
	<i>LB47</i>	Letter LBL55	Burritt Allen Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	7 April 1863
	<i>LB48</i>	Letter LBL56	Burritt Allen Brown	Merritt Brown	8 April 1863
	<i>LB49</i>	Letter LBL57	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	30 April 1863
	<i>LB50</i>	Letter LBL58	Burritt Allen Brown	Ellen Brown	29 May 1863
	<i>LB51</i>	Letter LBL59	Burritt Allen Brown	Ellen Brown	27 June 1863
	<i>LB52</i>	Letter LBL60	Albert Ransom	Ellen Brown	27 June 1863
	<i>LB53</i>	Letter LBL61	Burritt Allen Brown	[Unknown]	No Date 1863
	<i>LB54</i>	Letter LBL62	Burritt Allen Brown	Nettie Brown	No Date 1863
	<i>LB55</i>	Letter LBL63	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred and Mary Brown	19 May 1865
	<i>LB56</i>	Letter LBL64	Lewis Henry Brown	Nettie Brown	No Date

<i>Box #</i>	<i>Folder #</i>	<i>Item #</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>LB03</b>					
	<i>LB57</i>	Envelope			
		LBE02	Lewis Henry Brown	Mary E. Brown	9 October 1862
		LBE03	Lewis Henry Brown	Alfred Nathaniel Brown	No Date
		LBE04	Lewis Henry Brown	Burritt Allen Brown	No Date
		LBE05	Lewis Henry Brown	Ellen Brown	No Date
		LBE06	Lewis Henry Brown	Mary E. Brown	No Date
		LBE07	Unknown	Merritt Brown	No Date
<b>LB04</b>					
	<i>LB58</i>	Contextualization			
		LBC01	Randall Miles		2002
		LBC02	Randall Miles		2002
		LBC03	Randall Miles		2002
		LBC04	Randall Miles		2005
	<i>LB59</i>	Military Service Record			
		LBM01	Lewis Henry Brown	NARA	15 November 2002
	<i>LB60</i>	Military Service Record			
		LBM02	Lewis Henry Brown	NARA	15 November 2002
	<i>LB61</i>	Military Service Record			
		LBM03	Burritt Allen Brown	NARA	15 November 2002
	<i>LB62</i>	Military Service Record			
		LBM04	Burritt Allen Brown	NARA	29 January 2003
	<i>LB63</i>	Military Service Record			
		LBM05	Albert Ransom	NARA	15 November 2002
	<i>LB64</i>	Military Service Record			
		LBM06	Albert Ransom	NARA	29 January 2003
	<i>LB65</i>	Military Pension Record			
		LBR01	Lewis Henry Brown	NARA	31 October 2002
	<i>LB66</i>	Military Pension Record			
		LBR02	Burritt Allen Brown	NARA	20 November 2002
	<i>LB67</i>	Military Pension Record			
		LBR03	Albert Ransom	NARA	13 November 2002