

# Dixon and Jordan Family Papers

This collection contains letters written during the Civil War between the Dixon and Jordan family members of Illinois. The soldiers were part of the 47th and 112th Regiments of Illinois Volunteers.

## Descriptive Summary

**Creator:** Dixon and Jordan families  
**Title:** Dixon and Jordan family papers  
**Dates:** 1840-circa 1898, bulk 1861-1863  
**Size:** 1 box, 47 folders  
**Location:** SC15-9

## Administrative Information

**Restrictions on access:** Unrestricted access.

**Additional physical form available:** Some letters have been photocopied and two have been digitized.

**Acquisition information:** Unknown.

**Citation note:** Dixon and Jordan family papers (SC15-9), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

## Collection Description

### **Biographical/historical note**

The 1860 United States Federal Census was consulted to place the family members in relationships. A Lemuel and Rosanna Dixon were listed in 1860 as living in Stark County, Essex Township, Illinois. He was listed as age 55 and she as 51. Three others were listed with them: William at age 19, Mary at age 16, and Lemuel at age 12. Henry Hixson, age 25, who is a letter writer in this collection, was listed as living with Samuel and Hannah Dixon. There is also a Henry Dixon, age 39, and wife Anna listed. A William Dixon, age 26, was listed with the Edmund Graves (related) household and David Dewey, age 27, was found listed in Valley Township, Stark County, Illinois. Time did not permit a more exhaustive, further search on the names. The fate of the families involved has not been researched at the time of processing. The family vital records information included indicates that Lemuel Dixon died on June 8, 1863 and his wife Rosanna died Sept. 2, 1885.

Regimental histories were located on the Internet for both the 47th Regiment of Illinois Volunteers as well as the 112th regiment. These have been placed in the collection folder. It is easy to use these histories and pinpoint where the soldiers were and what activity they were involved in at the time of the postmarked letters. The 47th was organized in August of 1861 at Peoria, Illinois. The 112th was mustered in a year later at Peoria. Most of the involvement for the 47th was in states along the Mississippi River including St. Louis, Missouri; Vicksburg, Mississippi, and other places in that state as well as Tennessee. The 112th did fight in Kentucky, Tennessee and farther to the east.

## Scope and content note

The collection is a part of a group of Civil War collections found in Special Collections in the SC 15 number series.

This collection contains 46 handwritten letters dating from 1840 to 1888 of which 39 are Civil War era correspondence dated December 3, 1861 to March 21, 1865. Also included is a three page handwritten list of births, marriages and deaths which lists names for both the Dixon family and Jordan family who thus appear to be related. It has been established that the Dixon family were from Stark County, Illinois. This county is located in the upper central part of the state of Illinois and is just north of Peoria County and the city of Peoria. The parents of at least William Dixon appear to be Lemuel and Rosanah Dixon. Most of the letters from the soldiers writing back home are from William Dixon, Joel Dixon, and Henry Dixon. Those family members attached to Company K, 47th Regiment, Illinois Volunteers, wrote the majority of the war letters. However, there are some letters from members of Company E, 112th Regiment, Illinois Volunteers (Folders 24, 35, and 44)

Most of the letters are not difficult to read although much of the spelling is done phonetically. Usually a one-page letter was sent either on plain, folded stationary although some stationary does bear a printed image of a flag, person, or event. Only a few letters contain an accompanying envelope. Most start with a common greeting of the day and then proceed to tell of the health of the sender and others in the company. Also found in the letters is some battle information, comments concerning their pay, their feelings about the war, description of the camp and their tents, the food, hospital settings, African American soldiers, the politics of the day including the Emancipation Proclamation, Copperheads, the Rebels, etc. Some letters were written from a hospital as the soldier was recuperating from either a wound or some illness and fever. By far the topic most written about was the state of health and lack of it as well as dying.

Letter writers include: John Swain, Lemuel Dixon, Sara Dixon, Joel Dixon, Charles Edmund, W. R. Jordan, Henry Hixson, and Frank and Nancy Shriner. Letters were written from: Coles County, IL; West Chester, PA; Vinton County, OH; Jefferson City, MO; Cole County, MO; Otterville, MO; Pittsburg Landing, TN; Hamburg Landing; Hamburg, TN; Camp Corinth; Farmington, MS; Camp Riansa; Corinth, MS; Lexington, KY; Grand Junction; Keokuk, IA; Keokuk Point; Allensville, OH; Ridgeway Station; Stark County, IL; Nashville, TN; Millikens Bend, LA; Vicksburg, MS; Castville, GA; Memphis TN; and Coal Hill, OH.

It is felt that the letters were typical of the day and of Civil War correspondence. The writers were literate but probably did not receive more than an average, rural area education. Most are not philosophic about the times and it is evident the writers longed to receive letters and were diligent about sending letters home. Now and then appears a comment about the commanding officer but most of the letter content concerns those they fought next to who came from the same community and many times were related to each other. These letters were all from Union soldiers who generally referred to the Confederates as Rebels or Seccesh.

## Collection Inventory

- **Folder 1** – Correspondence, n.d., partial, p.2 only, with earlier envelope addressed to Lemuel Dixon, content includes describing family artifacts.
- **Folder 2** – Correspondence, July 18, n.d. (ca1860s), 2 pages, contents concern the Civil War. Addressed to: Lemuel Dixon, sender: John Swain

- **Folder 3** – Will document for William Dixon who died Aug. 30, 1840, 1 page, recorded on Oct. 6, 1840, Coles County, Illinois
- **Folder 4** – Correspondence, June, 1850/ April 1849, 2 pages, from West Chester, Penn. Addressed to Lemuel Dixon, Jackson County, Harrison Ts, Ohio, contains family news from a cousin.
- **Folder 5** – Correspondence, April 22, 1855, 2 pages, from Vinton County, Ohio signed by Stephen Derby to Lemuel Dixon, Toulon, Stark County, Illinois
- **Folder 6** – Correspondence, February 7 and 8, 1858, 2 pages, from Vinton County, Ohio, addressed “Dear Cousin”, unsigned.
- **Folder 7** – Text for two songs, “Belle Brandon” and “Our Own Mary Ann”, 2 pages, 1860, Lemuel Dixon.
- **Folder 8** – Correspondence, December 3, 1861, Jefferson City, Mo., Camp Price?, from Joel Dixon to Lemuel Dixon, 1 page, image of George Washington printed on stationary, photocopy included.
- **Folder 9** – Correspondence, December 6, 1861, Cole County, Mo., Camp Price, from William Dixon to Lemuel Dixon, 1 page, portion cut out.
- **Folder 10** – Correspondence, December 7, 1861, Jefferson City, Mo., Company K, from William Dixon to L. Dixon, 1 page.
- **Folder 11** – Correspondence, December 24, 1861, Otterville, Mo., from William Dixon to L. Dixon and family, 1 page.
- **Folder 12** – Correspondence, February 18, 1862, to Lem and Rossana Dixon from Frank and Nancy Shriner, 2 pages folded, image of woman with flag and saying “None but the Brave deserve the Fair”, includes photocopy of letter.
- **Folder 13** – Correspondence, April 23, 1862, Pittsburg Landing, Tenn., Aboard the Allak Scott steamer 14 miles from Corinth, from H(eny) Dixon, 1 page folded, includes photocopy of letter.
- **Folder 14** – Correspondence, n.d. [April, 1862], Hamburg Landing, from David Dewey, 2 pages.
- **Folder 15** – Correspondence, April 26, 1862, Hamburg, Tennessee, from Henry Hixson to Mr. Dixon, includes photocopy of letter.
- **Folder 16** – Correspondence, May 27, 1862, Camp Corinth, from Joel Dixon to Mr. Lemuel D., 1 page folded.
- **Folder 17** – Correspondence, May 28, 1862, Farmington, from David Dewey to Robert Jordan, 2 pages.
- **Folder 18** – Correspondence, June 20, 1862, Hamburg Landing, Tenn., from H (eny) Dixon, 2 pages.
- **Folder 19** – Correspondence, July 15, 1862, Rienzi, Mississippi, from William Dixon to Lemuel Dixon and friends, 1 page folded, includes photocopy of letter.
- **Folder 20** – Correspondence, August 11, 1862, Camp Riansa [Rienzi], from William Dixon to Samuel Dixon, 1 page folded, includes image of an angel and the words “The Union Now Henceforth & Forever”.
- **Folder 21** – Correspondence, August 29, 1862, no location, from Eli Graves? To Uncle Lemuel Dixon, 1 page, includes photocopy of letter.
- **Folder 22** – Correspondence, October 18, 1862, no location, from W. Dixon to Lemuel Dixon, 1 page folded and envelope, includes photocopy of letter.
- **Folder 23** – Correspondence, Oct 27, 1862, Corinth, Miss., from Henry Dixon to Father [Lemuel Dixon], 1 page folded.
- **Folder 24** – Correspondence, October 27, 1862, Lexington, [Kentucky], Laf[Fayette] County, from P. M. Trapp, Company E, 112 regiment, Illinois vol., to Lemuel Dixon, 1 page folded, includes photocopy of letter.
- **Folder 25** – Correspondence, October 30, 1862, Camp near Corinth, from William Dixon to L. Dixon and all the rest, 1 page folded.
- **Folder 26** – Correspondence, Nov. 1, 1862, Camp near Corinth, from Wm [Dixon] to all, 1 page.
- **Folder 27** – Correspondence, Nov. 12, 1862, Camp west of Grand Junction [Tenn.], unsigned, addressed to respected friends, 1 page, folded, includes photocopy of letter.

- **Folder 28** – Correspondence, Nov. 15, 1862, Keokuk, [Iowa], from Henry Dixon to his father, 1 page folded, includes photocopy of letter.
- **Folder 29** – Correspondence, December 30, 1862, Vinton County, O[hio], unsigned addressed to “Dear Brother”, 2 pages.
- **Folder 30** – Correspondence, January 8, 1863, Keokuk, Iowa, from Joel to Uncle Lemuel, 2 pages.
- **Folder 31** – Correspondence, January 16, 1863, Allensville, Ohio, from Frank and Nancy Shriner to Lemuel and Rosannah Dixon, 1 page folded, includes envelope. Stationary has image of eagle and says “Union Forever”.
- **Folder 32** – Correspondence, January 21, 1863, Miss., from Wm. Dixon to Lemuel Dixon and all the rest, 1 page.
- **Folder 33** – Correspondence, January 21, 1863, Stark Co., Illinois, unsigned, [Mr. Darby], 1 page folded. Discusses political situation of nation.
- **Folder 34** – Correspondence, January 22, 1863, Keokuk, Iowa, from Joel [Dixon] to respected friends, 2 pages.
- **Folder 35** – Correspondence, January 22, 1863, Corinth, Miss., from William Dixon to Lemuel Dixon, addition to Mary Dixon, 1 page.
- **Folder 36** – Correspondence, January 26, 1863, Lexington, Kentucky, unsigned, addressed to Friend Dixon, 1 page folded. (See typescript at end of finding aid)
- **Folder 37** – Correspondence, January 29, 1863, Corinth, Miss., from William Dixon to Lemuel Dixon and all, 1 page folded, picture of General Lyon, “First to fall. Never to be forgotten”.
- **Folder 38** – Correspondence, February the last [28], 1863, Ridgeway Station [Tennessee], from William Dixon to Lemuel Dixon, 1 page folded, includes photocopy of letter.
- **Folder 39** – Correspondence, March 21, 1863, Stark Co., Ills, from Lemuel Dixon to Dear Friends, 3 pages folded.
- **Folder 40** – Correspondence, March 24, 1863, Nashville, Tennessee, General Hospital, unsigned, 2 pages folded, may be parts of two different letters. Image of soldier in camp on stationary.
- **Folder 41** – Correspondence, April 15, 1863, Camp near Milliken’s Bend, Louisiana, from William Dixon addressed to Dear Father, 1 page folded
- **Folder 42** – Correspondence, June 2, 1863, Camp on Hains Bluff [Vicksburg], Miss., unsigned to Respected Friends, 1 page folded. (See typescript at end of finding aid)
- **Folder 43** – Correspondence, August 15, 1863, State of Miss., Camp near Bear Creeke, from William Dixon to his mother Rosannah Dixon, 1 page folded.
- **Folder 44** – Correspondence, May 22, 1864, Camp near Castvill, Georgia, from William Dixon to Mary Dixon and Aunt Rosannah Dixon, 1 page folded.
- **Folder 45** – Correspondence, March 21, 1865, Memphis, Tenn., from Charles Edmond to William Dixon, 1 page folded.
- **Folder 46** – Correspondence, April 16, 1888, Coal Hill, Ohio, from W. R. Jordan to Robert Jordan, 2 pages.
- **Folder 47** – Family genealogy accounts including dates of births, marriages and deaths for the Jordan and Dixon family, 3 pages, last date given is 1898. At appears that Lemuel Dixon married Rosannah Graves and that one of their daughters, Sarah Dixon, married Robert L. Jordan and that is the connection between the two families.

Processed by Special Collections Department Manager Gloria Maxwell, October, 1992; further processing by Special Collections Librarian Sara Nyman, February, 2003.