



City of Manchester Archives
One City Hall Plaza
Manchester, NH 03101

603.624.6455 – mintranuovo@manchester.nh.gov
www.manchester.nh.gov/archives

Collection Summary

Repository: Manchester City Archives. Office of the City Clerk. City of Manchester, NH.

Creator: Office of the Treasurer. Finance Department. City of Manchester, NH.

Title: Civil War Soldiers' Relief Fund Ledgers

Collection Number: 0404.002

Accession Number: 2001.3; 2004.46

Dates: 1862-1865

Volume: 3 volumes

Languages: Collection materials are in English.

Related Collections: Finance Department record group (0404).

Access: Access to collection is open to the public. Please contact the archives for an appointment to view materials. Cite the collection number when making an appointment.

Digital Note: Materials are not accessible online at this time.

Conservation Notes: These records were restored through grant funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the American Heritage Preservation Program.

Finding Aid Prepared by: Sally Fellows, 2010; Mike Intranuovo, 2015.

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Historical Note

The Finance Department acts as the treasurer and custodian of all money and funds belonging to the City. In addition to other duties set forth in the charter or by law, the Finance Officer maintains accounting control over the finances of the city, prepares financial reports at least quarterly, and performs such other duties relating to budget management and control as the Board of Mayor and Aldermen may require.

During the Civil War, Manchester's manufacturing industry was negatively affected. The Amoskeag Company shut down many of its mills due to an inability to obtain cotton; widespread unemployment soon followed. Many men joined the military at this time for economic and patriotic reasons. The Abbott Guards, Jonathan Bagley's Company, the Martin Guards, and Baldwin's Coronet Band were some of the voluntary companies that many Manchester residents joined.

Many men who joined the military at this time were leaving behind a family in Manchester. The absence of a father, son, or brother from the household frequently meant economic hardship for the family. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen, noticing the hardship faced by these families, passed a resolution on April 25, 1861. The resolution authorized an appropriation of \$10,000 to set up a fund to loan money to the families of Manchester soldiers.

Collection Description

The Civil War Soldiers' Relief Fund Ledgers document the disbursement of funds to families of Manchester soldiers fighting in the Civil War. It consists of three volumes, which contain semi-alphabetical entries.

One volume is a draft book dated 1862-1865, which contains the names of soldiers who were candidates to receive monetary relief. It also contains personal information on the status of each soldier, such as death dates and accounts of wounds. Notations stating a soldier deserted are included, which resulted in no payment given to the family. Another type of notation included that the wife had remarried, which resulted in discontinuance of payment.

The two other volumes in the collection are the receipt books, which are the final copies of the draft book submitted by the Office of the Treasurer to the Board of Mayor and Alderman for approval. The individual signing for the amount is listed next to the amount paid, and in most cases it is the name of the soldier's wife. If a soldier died or was discharged, this was noted in the "signee" column. More information is documented in these volumes during the later years of the war; discharge dates and death dates become more frequent. After the final date of payment in December 1865, there are notations regarding the personal status of the individual receiving payment, the regiment of the soldier, and more dates of death or discharge.