

**Lorin Kingsbury**  
**Letters, 1800-1913 (bulk: 1865)**  
**MSA 461**

**Introduction**

This collection contains the 1865 Civil War letters of Lorin Kingsbury (1822-?), of Londonderry, Vermont, and town records from Landgrove and surrounding Vermont towns. The collection was given to the Vermont Historical Society in 2007, by Jane C. Van Nort, of Spring, Texas (ms. acc. no. 2007.5), in memory of Arthur Cyldes Van Nort and Alan Delos Van Nort. Mrs. Van Nort's husband's father obtained the papers when he had been serving as a forest ranger in the Green Mountains. The collection is housed in one archival flip top box and occupies .25 linear feet.

**Biographical Note**

Lorin Kingsbury, who signed his name with an "i" although the military records and some census records spell his name as "Loren," was born May 4, 1822, in Middlebury, Vermont, the son of Squire A. Kingsbury (1796-1877, born Chesterfield, N.H., died Jamaica, Vermont), and Esther Streeter Kingsbury (1797-?, born Townsend, Vermont). The children of Squire and Esther were Russell (b. 1820), Lorin (b. 1822), Elliot (b.1825), Comfort (1827-1827), and Emeline (b. 1835).

The 1860 census lists "Loren," age 38, his wife "Rachael P.," aged 34, and daughter Viola E., age 9, living in Londonderry, Vermont. Lorin enlisted with the Vermont Volunteers on August 31, 1864, and was mustered out June 13, 1865. He served as a private, Company H, 9<sup>th</sup> Regiment Vermont Infantry. In the 1880 U.S. census "Lorin" and "Rachel" are still living in Londonderry. The 1890 Veterans Schedule lists Lorin in Londonderry.

**Scope and Content**

The collection is made up of the 1865 Civil War letters of Lorin Kingsbury (1822-?) of Londonderry, Vermont, and a variety of unrelated material from neighboring Landgrove, Vermont, and surrounding towns located in south central Vermont where the counties of Windham, Windsor, and Bennington meet.

The letters that Kingsbury wrote to his wife and daughter were all written on the same, small sized stationary. They have been sewn together in a packet. The first and last pages are heavily worn and have been reinforced with cellophane tape that has yellowed. There is a typed inventory and excerpts of these letters.

Most of Kingsbury letters discuss army life, with good descriptions of picket duty, seeing the enemy close by, seeing Richmond burning, and describing that city after its fall. Later he was on picket duty on the Danville line. Once or twice he speaks of the harshness of battles, but he asks his wife not to let others know these facts. On May 10<sup>th</sup>

he writes a detailed account of the earlier Fair Oaks defeat, but in general he seems to have tried to spare his wife and young daughter the horrors of the war. He also tries to give them long-distance advice on how to run the farm, until he returns, and he gives love and guidance to his daughter.

The collection also includes five other Civil War letters: 2 from “Dexter” at Wolf Shoals, April & May, 1863; one from John McClay, 11<sup>th</sup> Vt. Reg., Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>, 1864; and two letters from George Lewis, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vt. Reg., June & July, 1862.

The collection also contains two folders of town records. The first folder contains property and tax lists from Landgrove, Vermont, for the period 1800-1806. The second folder contains papers relating to Grafton, Peru, Weston, Stratton, and Landgrove, for the period 1819-1913.

Finally, the collection includes a folder of miscellaneous letters relating to Vermonters from Windhall, Jamaica, Landgrove, and Springfield, Vermont.

### Inventory

- MSA461:01 Lorin Kingsbury Civil War letters, March 6, 1865-June 1, 1865.
- :02 Two war letters from “Dexter” at Wolf Shoals, April & May, 1863. Single war letter from John McClay, 11<sup>th</sup> Vt. Reg., Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>, 1864. Two letters from George Lewis, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vt. Reg., June & July, 1862.
- :03 Landgrove, Vermont, Records, 1800-1806
1. 1800 list of residents and their taxable property.
  2. 802 highway tax list.
  3. 1803 taxable property list.
  4. 1806 taxable property list.
  5. Undated highway tax list.
  6. Undated boundary proposal with town of Peru.
- :04 Town records from Weston, Peru, etc, 1819-1913.
1. Specific measurements of new road from Grafton to Peru, and Landgrove’s share of the cost, 1819.
  2. Weston Overseer of the Poor indenture for 11-year-old girl, till she reaches 18, 1849.
  3. As above, but age 2 “illegitimate child”, till she reaches age 21, 1869.
  4. Farmers’ Mutual Fire policy, Stratton, 1865.
  5. Weston vs. an enlistee into the army over the sum he was due for his enlistment, 1865.
  6. U.S. court decree settling dispute between Weston chair manufacturer and a wholesale dealer, 1866.
  7. Deed for sale of land, Weston, 1868.

8. \_\_\_\_\_, Peru, 1869.
  9. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1913.
  10. Five bonds for "faithful service", Landgrove constable, tax collector, town clerk, road commissioner, 1900-1908.
- :04 Miscellaneous letters, 1831-1862
- 1.-4. Levi Gale (Windhall) & Clarissa Howard (Warick, Mass.) love letters, then they marry, 1831-1832.
  5. 1832 letter from Boston asking "Fenn" to come down to work, that cholera in Boston is not bad so its safe to come.
  6. Undated to Austin Fenn in Boston.
  7. Joel Fenn to Austin Fenn in Boston, undated.
  8. 1840 to William Stiles of Jamaica, Vt.
  - 9.-10. To Ambrose Woodward of Landgrove about getting a minister, 1848, 1850.
  - 11.-12. To Mary Felton, Springfield, Vt., 1855, 1856.
  13. To Mrs. Ambrose Woodward, Londonderry, 1862, some talk of the war.

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kingsbury.doc  
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