

**Wheelock Graves Veazey (1835-1898)**  
**Papers, 1853-1894**  
**Doc 99 & Doc 100**

**Introduction**

This collection contains the Civil War-era papers of Wheelock Graves Veazey (1835-1898), of Springfield and Rutland, Vermont, a hero of the Battle of Gettysburg. The collection came to the Vermont Historical Society in two pieces. The first part, which is now series II, was a gift from H. W. Clement of Cocoa (?), Florida, in November 1928 (acc. no. 20271). The second part, now series I, was a gift from John Clement in the summer of 1961. John Clement received this series from Mrs. Albin Beard Veazey, Wheelock Veazey's daughter-in-law, perhaps a neighbor of his in Rutland. The collection occupies two document storage boxes (2 linear feet).

**Biographical Note**

Wheelock Graves Veazey was born in Brentwood, New Hampshire, on December 5, 1835. He was the youngest of ten children born to Jonathan Veazey, Jr. (1791-1860) and Annie (Stevens) Veazey (1793-1865). He received his primary education at Phillips Exeter Academy, subsequently attending Dartmouth College from where he graduated in 1859. Veazey went on to study at the Law School at Albany, New York. He began his law practice in Springfield, Vermont, in 1860.

Not much is known about Veazey's college years, but it was during these years that he courted his future wife, Julia A. Beard, daughter of the Hon. Albin Beard and Julia A. (Crooker) Beard. The Beard family hailed from Nashua, New Hampshire, where Albin Beard was the proprietor and editor of the *Nashua Telegraph*. Their courtship culminated in marriage on June 22, 1861. Their marriage and Veazey's fledgling law practice were interrupted by Veazey's enlistment to fight in the Civil War, with Company A of the Third Regiment of Vermont Volunteers.

By May of 1862, Veazey was commissioned a captain, soon after a major and then lieutenant colonel. In October of 1862, he was promoted to full colonel. With this appointment, he took command of the Sixteenth Regiment of Vermont Volunteers. He remained colonel of this regiment until August 1863 when the company mustered out of service and he along with it.

Colonel Veazey is best remembered for the role his Sixteenth Regiment played at the Battle of Gettysburg. On the third and final day of that battle, Veazey's men were instrumental in defeating the final thrust towards victory of the Confederate rebels. For his service rendered at Gettysburg, Veazey was awarded the Medal of Honor. The citation for this honor reads: "Rapidly assembled his regiment and charged the enemy's flank; changed front under heavy fire and charged and destroyed a Confederate brigade, all this with new troops in their first battle." This citation is included in the Veazey papers (Doc 99:14).

On returning to Vermont, Veazey resumed his practice of law in Springfield, later in Rutland, until 1879. For two years, 1872 and 1873, Veazey held a State Senate seat from Rutland County. In 1878, Veazey and the Hon. C.W. Willard were appointed commissioners by Governor Redfield Proctor to revise the laws of the State of Vermont. The revision was adopted by the legislature in 1880. In 1879, Veazey was appointed Judge of the Supreme Court of Vermont, a position he retained through successive elections for ten years. He resigned from the Court in 1889 to accept an appointment from President Benjamin Harrison as a member of the Board of Interstate Commerce Commissioners. These are a few of the major posts Veazey held after the Civil War. He was an active citizen throughout his life; a complete listing of his many activities would run long.

Col. Wheelock Veazey died in Washington, D.C., on March 22, 1898. Though his wife Julia was but a year younger than he, she lived on for thirty years more after his death, dying in 1928. They are buried together in Arlington National Cemetery. The Veazeys had four children, two of whom lived to adulthood: Anne Gettysburg Walton (1863-1926) and Albin Beard Veazey, who died in 1936.

### **Scope and Content Notes**

The Wheelock Graves Veazey Papers are comprised of two separate collections that can be broadly described as personal papers and legal papers.

The first part of the collections contains, in large part, letters written by Veazey to his wife during his long absence due to his service in the Civil War. There are a few early letters between the two, and a few later letters, but most are from the period 1861-1865. This collection also contains documents of a more broadly historical nature. These documents include: Veazey's orations; his accounts of the Battle of Gettysburg; correspondence with George Benedict, the historian of the Vermont Volunteers; part of an interview concerning Veazey's political ambitions. Useful for looking into Veazey's family background, are two letters to Veazey detailing his ancestry in both maternal and paternal lines. There are postal cards from court clerks and colleagues; these short cards are of lesser importance because they are short communications without context. There are a few letters to Julia Veazey from family members. Lastly, the collection contains correspondence, written from 1938-1939, between Veazey's descendants in which they discuss the collection.

A useful supplement to the letters can be found in a binder included with the folders (Doc 99:8). Here, many of Veazey's letters, which are at times difficult to read, have been transcribed. The transcriptions, though not comprehensive of the total collection of letters, provide a large sample from the years 1862 and 1863. Included in the binder is a "Personalities List" for the people whom Veazey mentions in his letters; a photocopied map with camp locations highlighted; correspondence between the Vermont Historical Society and Eric Ward, the transcriber, during 1998. The transcriptions are also saved on a 3.5" computer disk located at the front of the binder.

The second half of the Veazey collection is principally made up of correspondence written to Veazey in his capacity as an attorney. The bulk of this correspondence dates from the period, 1874-1878; however, there is a sizable portion of documents dating from the period during the Civil War.

There are relatively few personal letters in these Civil War documents. Rather, there are many official communications between Veazey and government officials, recruits and other officers engaged in the conflict. There are, for instance, quite a few requests for referrals from Veazey. Also included are the certificate commissioning Veazey a recruiting agent for the State of Vermont (dated 1864) and an ordinance abstract for the Vermont Volunteers. Of particular interest here may be Veazey's pocket diaries from 1861 and 1863.

Among the correspondents of the papers from Veazey's law practice are: G.G. Benedict, J.S. Morrill, E.J. Ormsbee, E.J. Phelps, Wm.M. Pingry, Luke P. Poland, Redfield Proctor, Stephen Thomas and Peter T. Washburn. There is also correspondence concerning the Phair murder case. Many bills and receipts are included in the collection. In Doc 100:5 (the entire year 1876), for instance, there is no correspondence but only bills and receipts. From June of 1874 (Doc 99:32), there is one of the few pieces written by Veazey in this part of the collection, a draft for a letter to Redfield Proctor, in which Veazey asks his well-meaning colleagues at the Republican Convention in Burlington not to nominate him for Governor. In the last folder, Doc 100:16, there is a letter, the only of its kind in the collection, from Veazey's young daughter, Anne Gettysburg Veazey.

## Organization

The collection is divided into two series, Personal Papers (Doc 99:1-17) and Official Correspondence and Legal Papers (Doc 99:18-Doc 100:16). These two series reflect the fact that these papers came to the VHS at two different times from two different donors. Within the first series the papers are divided between correspondence to Veazey's wife and acquaintances and other Civil War-related materials such as orations and an account of the Battle of Gettysburg. The second series is arranged chronologically from 1853 to 1888.

## Related Collections

In the VHS manuscript catalog there are many entries under the name "Veazey." Only a handful of these entries are directly related to the life of Wheelock Veazey. In the Clement Family Papers, Doc 194:2, one will find letters to and from Veazey's daughter Anne G. Veazey. Several of these letters are written to W.G. Veazey and Julia B. Veazey.

Books with entries for Veazey include: *Full Duty: Vermonters In The Civil War*, by Howard Coffin, *Nine Months to Gettysburg: Stannard's Vermonters and the Repulse of Pickett's Charge*, also by Coffin and, G.G. Benedict's, *Vermont In The Civil War*.

The *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol. XXV, no.2, 1995) contains an article "Wheelock Graves Veazey" by David F. Cross, M.D., a succinct biography of Veazey. The library collection also includes a Memorial Day address on Veazey by Joseph H. Goulding (B/V486g). And, in *Vermont*, Apr. 1905, v.10, pg. 274, one will find a portrait of Veazey and information on the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization Veazey was commander of for some years. An article entitled "Peacetime Patriot" by Edna B. Engle (Misc. File Add.—Veazey) adds useful oversight to Veazey's career after his Civil War service (copy located in Doc 99:0).

The VHS broadside collection contains a colored drawing of a shield that incorporates military insignia, Veazey's service record, an American eagle, the state seal, and a photograph of Veazey himself (Bside B B/V486). There are nine photographs of Veazey during different periods of his life in the picture file (F-PO-Veazey and Size). Several of these photographs can be found as photocopy reproductions in Doc 99:0. One portrait from the picture file is reproduced in *Dedication of the Bennington Battle Monument* (pg. 78), in honor of Veazey's position as President of the Day on that occasion.

The VHS museum has in its collection two items that belonged to Colonel Veazey: his camp lantern from the Battle of Gettysburg (53.8 a+b) and his Congressional Medal of Honor (61.44).

## Inventory

### I. Personal Papers

#### A. Correspondence

- Doc 99:1 From Veazey to his wife Julia, 1858-1861
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_, from Camp Baxter, St. Johnsbury, Vt., June 27-July 21, 1861  
 \_\_\_\_\_, from Camp Leyons, Georgetown Heights, Washington, D.C.,  
 July 24-Sept. 6, 1861  
 \_\_\_\_\_, from Camp Advance, Va., Sept. 11-Oct. (?), 1861  
 \_\_\_\_\_, from Camp Griffin, Va., Oct. 2-Dec. 31, 1861.
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_, transcribed letter, Richmond, Va., area; May 14, 1862.
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, Jan. 3-Mar. 9, 1862.  
 \_\_\_\_\_, various camps, Mar. 13-April 27, 1862.  
 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, Williamsburg/Richmond vicinity, May 7-June 15, 1862.  
 \_\_\_\_\_, from near Harrison's Landing, Va., July 5-Aug. 12, 1862.  
 \_\_\_\_\_, from hospitals, Washington, D.C., Camp Vermont and various,  
 Aug 22-Dec. 28, 1862.
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_, from various Va. camps, mainly Fairfax Station,  
 Jan. 4-Mar. 22, 1863. *Veazey writes "1862" on first five letters.*  
 \_\_\_\_\_, from camps near Union Mills and Bristow Station, Va.,  
 Mar. 24-June 25, 1863. *Includes undated letter, note from July 11  
 and telegram from July 23, 1863.*
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_, from various places, Aug. 9, 1864-Feb. 17, 1865.

*Several undated letters.*

- 7 \_\_\_\_\_, several letters from 1887, 1894, 1895.  
 8 \_\_\_\_\_, transcriptions binder (transcribed by Eric Ward for VHS 1998.)  
 9 Other correspondence, with various people, and personal postal cards,  
 1861-1891.  
 10 \_\_\_\_\_, to Julia Veazey, 1861-1865  
 11 \_\_\_\_\_, concerning Veazey and Beard ancestry, ca. 1891-1894.
- B. Other
- 12 Two of Veazey's accounts of Gettysburg, 1864 and undated.  
 Correspondence with George Benedict, Vermont Volunteers historian,  
 1886, and undated.  
 13 Orations, on Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, Memorial Day Address, undated  
 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, transcribed  
 \_\_\_\_\_, dedication of monument to Gen. George Stannard,  
 Burlington, Vt., June 20, 1889  
 \_\_\_\_\_, Springfield, Memorial Day Address, 1893  
 \_\_\_\_\_, or essay read aloud, at a Barmecide Feast, undated  
 14 Citation, for Medal of Honor, and two short biographs of Veazey,  
 undated.  
 15 Interview, partial, concerning Veazey's political ambitions, 1891  
 16 Postal cards, from courts and colleagues, undated  
 17 Correspondence, concerning the collection, 1938-1939

II. Official Correspondence and Legal Papers

- Doc 99:18 1853-1858  
 19 1860-1862, includes a pocket diary  
 20 1863, includes a pocket diary  
 21 1864, Jan.-Mar.  
 22 \_\_\_\_\_, Apr.-Dec.  
 23 1865-1868  
 24 1869  
 25 1870, Jan.-Aug.  
 26 \_\_\_\_\_, Sept.-Dec.  
 27 1871-1872  
 28 Jan.-June 1873  
 29 \_\_\_\_\_, July-Aug.  
 30 \_\_\_\_\_, Sept.-Oct.  
 31 \_\_\_\_\_, Nov.-Dec.  
 32 1874, Jan.-June  
 33 \_\_\_\_\_, July-Oct.  
 34 \_\_\_\_\_, Nov.-Dec.
- Doc 100:1 1875, Jan.-May  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_, June-July 15  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_, July 16-Sept.

- 4 \_\_\_\_\_, Oct.-Dec.
- 5 1876
- 6 1877, Jan.-Apr.
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_, May-July
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_, Aug.-Oct.
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_, Nov.
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_, Dec.
- 11 1878, Feb.-Mar.
- 12 \_\_\_\_\_, Apr.
- 13 \_\_\_\_\_, May
- 14 \_\_\_\_\_, July-Oct.
- 15 1879-1888
- 16 Incomplete and undated

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