

**The Filson Historical Society**

**Schmidt family  
Papers, 1858-1895.**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for this collection, see the  
Curator of Special Collections, James J. Holmberg.

**Size of Collection:**

2 cubic feet

**Locator Number:**

Mss./A/S349

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**Scope and Content Note**

The collection contains 209 letters written between 1858 and 1895 by or to members of the Henry Schmidt family and their relatives living in Ohio and Kansas. The majority was written by Henry to his fiancée and wife, Kate, while he served with the 15<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry regiments in the Civil War. The letters reflect the deep affection that Henry had for Kate and his concern for her financial well being, her living conditions during his long absences and that she become a faithful member of the Catholic church. Some letters reveal his feelings about the Copperhead movement in Ohio and his ambivalence regarding slavery. They also provide many details of military engagements involving the 37<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry Regt., particularly the siege of Vicksburg and the Atlanta Campaign. He also provides a description of his experiences while a paroled prisoner in camps near Columbus, Ohio in 1862. Additional letters were written by Kate while she waited for his return after the war and by fellow soldiers in the 37<sup>th</sup> regiment.

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**Biographical Note**

Joseph Henry Schmidt was born in Wapakoneta, Auglaize County, Ohio, on 18 December 1839, the son of Caspar Schmidt, a German immigrant. In April 1861, he enlisted for three months service with Company K of the 15<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry (O.V.I.) and served as a sergeant. On 22 August 1861, following the mustering out of the 15<sup>th</sup> Ohio, he re-enlisted with Company C of the 37<sup>th</sup> O.V.I., a primarily German regiment. He was appointed 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant of Company C on 7 September 1861 and promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant of Company A on 31 March 1862 and to Captain of that company on 4 March 1863. He saw action in West Virginia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Georgia and the Carolinas before being mustered out in August 1865, in Little Rock, Arkansas. After the birth of their first child in November 1861, Henry married Mary Katherine ('Kate') Nye in May 1862. After the war, Henry returned to Wapakoneta where he and Kate eventually had 9 children, 3 of whom survived infancy. He died 23 December 1925 at the age of 86 and Kate died 16 May 1926 at the age of 82. Both are buried in St. Joseph Cemetery, Wapakoneta, Ohio.

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**List of Folders**

- Folder 1: Correspondence; 1858 – 1861
- Folder 2: Correspondence; January – June 1862
- Folder 3: Correspondence; July – September 1862
- Folder 4: Correspondence; October – December 1862
- Folder 5: Correspondence; January – April 1863
- Folder 6: Correspondence; May – December 1863
- Folder 7: Correspondence; January – May 1864
- Folder 8: Correspondence; June – August 1864
- Folder 9: Correspondence; September – December 1864
- Folder 10: Correspondence; January – April 1865
- Folder 11: Correspondence; May – June 1865
- Folder 12: Correspondence; July 1865
- Folder 13: Correspondence; August, 1865 – 1895
- Folder 14: Military papers
- Folder 15: Miscellaneous, undated papers
- Folder 16: Transcriptions for correspondence in Folders 1-3
- Folder 17: Transcriptions for correspondence in Folders 4-6
- Folder 18: Transcriptions for correspondence in Folders 7-9
- Folder 19: Transcriptions for correspondence in Folders 10-13

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**Subject Headings**

Atlanta Campaign, 1864  
Catholic Church – Ohio  
Georgia – History – Civil War, 1861-1865  
Kansas – Description and travel  
Lookout Mountain (Tenn.), Battle of, 1863  
Love poetry, American  
Marriage – Ohio  
Ohio – History – Civil War, 1861-1865  
Schmidt family  
Sherman, William T. (William Tecumseh), 1820-1891  
Sherman's March to the Sea  
Tennessee – History – Civil War, 1861-1865  
United States – History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Participation, German American  
United States – History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Prisoners and prisons  
United States – History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Public opinion  
United States – History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Transportation  
United States. Army – Military life – History – 19th century  
United States. Army. Ohio Infantry Regiment, 15th (1861-1865)  
United States. Army. Ohio Infantry Regiment, 37th (1861-1865)  
Vicksburg (Miss.) – History – Civil War, 1861-1865  
War poetry, American  
West Virginia – History – Civil War, 1861-1865