



The New York Public Library  
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

**United States Sanitary Commission records. Pennsylvania archives**  
1861-1867  
MssCol 18781

The conservation, arrangement, and description of the collection was made possible by generous funding from the Robert W. Wilson Charitable Trust.

Compiled by Melissa Haley, 2013

## Summary

**Creator:** United States Sanitary Commission

**Title:** United States Sanitary Commission records. Pennsylvania archives

**Date:** 1861-1867

**Size:** 18.86 linear feet (43 boxes, 9 volumes, 1 oversized folder)

**Source:** Donated by the United States Sanitary Commission to the Astor Library, 1879

**Abstract:** The Pennsylvania Archives, 1861-1867, bring together the records of three USSC organizations working from offices at 1307 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia: the Philadelphia Agency, which was the operational office of the Philadelphia Associates who organized in 1861; the Women's Pennsylvania Branch, an auxiliary organization established in 1863; and the USSC's Canvassing and Supply Department, created in 1864 to coordinate fundraising and publicity among USSC eastern branches, including publication of the Sanitary Bulletin. Also present are records of supply and relief work conducted by USSC relief agents at Gettysburg and Harrisburg.

**Preferred citation:** United States Sanitary Commission records. Pennsylvania archives, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

**Processing note:** Compiled by Melissa Haley, 2013 Revised December 2013

**Related Materials:**

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## Scope and Content Note

The Pennsylvania Archives, 1861-1867, bring together the records of three USSC organizations working from offices at 1307 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia: the Philadelphia Agency, which was the operational office of the Philadelphia Associates who organized in 1861; the Women's Pennsylvania Branch, an auxiliary organization established in 1863; and the USSC's Canvassing and Supply Department, created in 1864 to coordinate fundraising and publicity among USSC eastern branches,

including publication of the Sanitary Bulletin. Also present are records of supply and relief work conducted by USSC relief agents at Gettysburg and Harrisburg.

Philadelphia Agency records, 1861-1867, document General Office administrative activities, including the operation of a large supply depot in Philadelphia; providing supply and relief services for USSC eastern operations, especially during major military campaigns; meeting the supply and special relief needs of the Army and servicemen in the Philadelphia area; and developing local support for the USSC. Materials include general correspondence, supply records, and bill books of expenses. Reports from relief agents assisting the Army of the Potomac during the spring and summer of 1864 are also found. Agency records document its ongoing responsibility for the receipt and shipment of supplies from branches to the Washington office and other USSC locations; the early procurement of supplies from aid societies prior to the transfer of this function to the Women's Pennsylvania Branch is documented in Supply Department letters received and a record of supplies received. The Special Relief Department's distribution of supplies to local Army hospitals and camps; and its assistance to soldiers and sailors in need, especially those discharged and disabled, are represented in letters received; journals, a register, and memo book of relief provided; reports; and supply requisitions, orders and receipts. Its management of a post-war Soldiers' Lodge, which also served women visiting relatives in hospitals, is reflected in record books documenting admissions, supply work, and provision of meals and lodgings; a memo book, a cash book, and papers relating to its construction. The Agency's operation of a Bureau of Employment for discharged soldiers and sailors after the war is represented in registers listing those seeking or providing employment, and letters received, largely from servicemen.

The Philadelphia Agency and the Women's Pennsylvania Branch worked closely together to maintain the supply depot and to provide special relief services in Philadelphia.

Women's Pennsylvania Branch materials, 1862-1865, document its efforts to collect and stock supplies from a large network of aid societies in Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey, for further shipment to USSC locations and for local distribution for relief purposes, as carried out by its Executive Committee, the Committee's Corresponding Secretary, and the Committee of Correspondence. These activities, including reorganization and expansion of the supply system, are documented in supply correspondence and record books, general correspondence, and minutes. Local supply distribution is the primary representation of special relief work in the records; other relief activities and the general management of Branch work are documented in committee and aid society reports to the Board of Managers, and Board of Manager minutes.

Records of the USSC's Canvassing and Supply Department, 1864-1865, document the efforts of its superintendent, Joseph Parrish, and canvasser and registrar John A. Anderson, to coordinate USSC fundraising and publicity in the northeast by assigning canvassing agents to give lectures promoting USSC goals and needs, and coordinating the publication of the Sanitary Bulletin. The Department also appears to have been in charge of providing blank forms and ledgers for the USSC. Materials consist of correspondence received and sent by Parrish and Anderson, including reports from canvassers; a departmental diary; items submitted for publication in the Bulletin; a list and directory of Bulletin subscribers; copies of USSC Standing Committee minutes, and financial records.

Also present are records documenting supply work conducted by USSC agents at Gettysburg in 1863 and at Harrisburg in 1864-1865, as well as the operation of a soldiers' lodge at Harrisburg, 1864-1865.

Records of other USSC organizations located at 1307 Chestnut Street in Philadelphia are arranged separately in the collection, as follows. They worked in close collaboration with the Agency.

Records of the Protective War Claim and Pension Agency (PWCPA) are found in the USSC Army and

Navy Claim Agency record group (MssCol 18809). Record of the Philadelphia Hospital Directory are found in the USSC Hospital Directory record group (MssCol 19877).

The Philadelphia Agency also housed the Philadelphia office of the USSC's Agency for the Purchase of Fresh Hospital Supplies (1863-1864), based in Washington, D.C. The Philadelphia office assisted with the purchase and shipment of fresh produce, poultry and meat for distribution to hospitals in Washington and also Gettysburg. Its records are found in the USSC Washington, D.C. record group (MssCol 22261).

Financial records for many of the Philadelphia-based entities can be found in the USSC Accounts and Vouchers record group (MssCol 18820).

## Container List

### I. Philadelphia Agency 1861-1867 (14 boxes, 9 volumes, 1 oversize folder)

#### Creator history

The Philadelphia Agency was the operational office of the USSC's Philadelphia Associates, who organized on November 7, 1861 to support the work of the U.S. Sanitary Commission through fundraising and the collection and distribution of hospital supplies. It ran a large supply depot and eventually conducted a wide range of relief work in the Philadelphia area, distributing supplies to Army hospitals and camps, and helping individual soldiers in need with transportation, food, clothing and lodging. After the war it established an Employment Bureau for discharged servicemen. The Agency provided important supply and relief services for the USSC's Central Office in Washington during major eastern military operations, notably at Gettysburg. It worked closely with the Women's Pennsylvania Branch in its supply and relief efforts after the Branch's establishment in February, 1863. The Philadelphia Associates and their collective activities were also known as the Philadelphia Branch of the United States Sanitary Commission.

Horace Binney Jr. served as chairman of an Executive Committee of nine associates. Charles J. Stillé (1819-1899), author of the History of the United States Sanitary Commission (1866), was an associate and later an Executive Committee member (Stillé also served on the USSC's Standing Committee). The treasurer was Caleb Cope (1797-1888). Early committees included Hospital Supplies and Medical and Sanitary Inspection. A supply depot with an office, originally known as the Depository and operated by the Committee on Supplies under Stillé's direction, was established in December at 1235 Chestnut Street.

The Associates hired William Platt in June 1862 as general superintendent of its agency to extend and systematize USSC work in the city; this resulted from an increasing influx of supplies and urgent requests from the USSC to assist its hospital transport services during the Peninsular Campaign in Virginia. Platt served until his death in November resulting from relief work at Antietam, when he was replaced by R.M. (Robert M.) Lewis. Operations moved to 27 South Sixth Street in December. The Philadelphia Agency established its headquarters at 1307 Chestnut Street, its final location, in the spring of 1863. The premises also housed most of the Women's Pennsylvania Branch activities, the supply depot, and the USSC's Canvassing and Supply Department.

The Agency's General Office, under the direction of the superintendent, coordinated supply and relief matters, and corresponded with USSC executive officers and others concerning its operations and services to meet any necessary needs. It hired relief agents and nurses, and handled publicity. Its Supply Department managed the collection and stocking of supplies from Philadelphia and area aid societies until the end of March 1863, when that function was transferred to the Women's Pennsylvania Branch. The Agency continued to handle the receipt and forwarding of supplies for USSC branches, offices, agencies and departments, especially to Washington and along the Atlantic coast. John W. Wilson joined the staff in 1863, assisting in the General Office and also serving as chief clerk of the USSC's Hospital Directory in Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia Agency also supported the needs of soldiers and their families in the Philadelphia area throughout the war and afterwards. Early special relief work consisted mainly of assisting soldiers with procuring transportation from the city, transporting sick soldiers arriving on steamers to area hospitals, and providing any necessary food and clothing. In April 1863, special relief work was turned over to the Women's Pennsylvania Branch, which administered activities through November, with partial financial support from the Philadelphia Agency. In December 1863, the Philadelphia Agency resumed control of special relief work for servicemen and expanded its services to form a Special Relief Department under the charge of a special relief agent. The Branch then fulfilled supply orders for the Agency's department, and focused its own relief services on the needs of dependent wives, mothers and children of soldiers.

Colonel Clement Soest was hired as the Agency's special relief agent, serving until August 1865. He was assisted by A.W. Morton. Soest visited area hospitals, camps and local relief associations, as well as individual disabled and discharged soldiers at their homes, to determine supply and relief needs. The Department continued to help soldiers passing through Philadelphia who encountered clothing, health or transportation problems. Soest also supervised the Agency's Soldiers' Lodge, which opened May 12, 1865 at 13th and Christian Streets. The Lodge assisted soldiers who were in transit, were discharged from hospitals, or were waiting for pay or artificial limbs. Discharged soldiers who were sick or seeking employment, and women visiting relatives in hospitals were also helped. It closed November 1, 1865.

The Agency opened a Bureau of Employment in Philadelphia on November 27, 1865, directed by John W. Wilson, to help discharged soldiers and sailors find jobs. Disabled servicemen were of special concern. The Bureau found employment for 1214 out of 2008 total applicants.

All Agency departments were closed by 1866, with the exception of the Bureau of Employment, which closed in January 1867.

#### Scope and content note

The Philadelphia Agency Archives, 1861-1867, comprise the records of the Agency's administrative General Office, the Special Relief Department, and the Bureau of Employment. Materials document the efforts of general superintendent R.M. Lewis and his staff to manage a large supply depot in Philadelphia for the USSC; to provide supply and relief services for USS eastern operations, especially during major military campaigns; to meet the supply and relief needs of the Army and servicemen in the Philadelphia area; and to develop local support for the USSC.

General Office correspondence documents the Agency's close collaboration with USSC staff in Washington and New York, and USSC branches and departments; the formation of the Women's Pennsylvania Branch; operations relating to the battle of Gettysburg and other battles and campaigns; requests from hospitals and individuals for supplies or other assistance; and office administration, which is also documented in bill books of expenses. Reports to Lewis from relief agents assisting the Army of the Potomac during the spring and summer of 1864 are also found. The Agency's main supply function, receiving supplies from other USSC branches and forwarding supplies to the Washington Office and other USSC locations, is documented in invoice books; these also include some local issues of supplies. The Agency's collection of supplies from aid societies in Pennsylvania and surrounding areas prior to the transfer of this function to the Women's Pennsylvania Branch are documented in General Office Supply Department letters received and a record of supplies received.

Records of the Special Relief Department document the variety of support provided to the Army and to individual soldiers and others in the Philadelphia area by Special Relief Agent Clement Soest and his assistant A.W. Morton, as seen in letters from various parties requesting special relief or supplies; Soest's journals and a memo book recording daily visits to Army hospitals and camps, soldiers' aid establishments, and discharged soldiers at their homes; a chronological register of special relief provided; and monthly reports summarizing work accomplished. Supply distribution is documented in requisitions, receipts, and reports. Operation of the Department's Soldiers' Lodge is represented in an admission register; records of meals, lodgings and supplies provided; and papers relating to its construction. Orders for railroad transportation for soldiers and others, as well as hospital reports listing patients at U.S. area hospitals are also present.

Bureau of Employment records, consisting of letters received from servicemen and others, and registers of applications for those seeking or providing jobs, document the Agency's post-war efforts to provide employment for discharged soldiers and sailors, especially the disabled, in the Philadelphia area.

The Philadelphia Agency worked closely with the Women's Pennsylvania Branch in its supply and special relief work. Researchers may wish to consult the Branch's Executive Committee records for additional documentation on aid society donations and supply work supporting the Agency's Special Relief Department.

There is little material related to the Great Central Fair of June 1864 in the Agency's records, although staff members were involved in Fair activities.

#### General Office records

I. Philadelphia Agency (cont.)  
General Office records (cont.)

**Letters received, 1861-1865** 1861-1865

Letters are primarily to Lewis, also to Platt, Cope, Wilson, and Stillé, and are mostly from other USSC offices and locations, especially Washington (Alfred J. Bloor, Frederick L. Olmsted, J. Foster Jenkins, John S. Blatchford, Frederick N. Knapp) and New York (Benjamin Collins). Letters primarily relate to supplies needed and received at Washington and elsewhere; they also concern applications for nursing positions; USSC finances, procedures and organization; supplies purchased (particularly condensed milk) or sent to Philadelphia from other USSC branches, the organization of the Women's Pennsylvania Branch, and operations following the battle at Gettysburg. There are also occasional requests for supplies or assistance from hospitals, soldiers' families, and individuals. Items are numbered consecutively across six disbound letterbooks. For inventory, see USSC Archive Department register, volume 18, USSC New York, N.Y. record group ( MssCol 22263).

1861 Nov 29-1863 Jan 31

b. 1 f. 1-9 #1-229

b. 1 f. 10 Index

1863 Feb 1-Oct 31

b. 1 f. 11-14 #230-329

b. 2 f. 1-5 #330-461

b. 2 f. 6 Index (blank)

1863 Nov 2-1864 Apr 30

b. 2 f. 7-15 #462-695

b. 2 f. 16 Index (blank)

1864 May 2-Sep 30

b. 3 f. 1-10 #696-933

b. 3 f. 11 Index (blank)

1864 Oct 1-1865 Mar 31

b. 3 f. 12-16 #934-1058

b. 4 f. 1-4 #1059-1153

b. 4 f. 5-13 1865 Apr 1-Sep 27

#1154-1367

b. 5 f. 1-6 **Telegrams received** 1862-1865

Telegrams (#585-586) to Lewis, Platt, Wilson, Stillé and others, mostly from the Washington Office and the New York Office, and other USSC departments and locations. Telegrams pertain to supplies, individual soldiers, and USSC meetings and other activities. Telegram strips (#591) total 47. Telegrams were originally arranged within Special Relief Department numbered documents.

**Letters sent** 1863-1867 (Letterpress copybooks)

Letters by Lewis and Wilson, mostly to other USSC personnel in the Washington Office (especially Alfred J. Bloor), Pennsylvania, Maryland and elsewhere regarding supplies shipped from Philadelphia. Letters also concern general Agency activities and finances.

b. 5 1863 Apr 7-1865 Mar 23  
v. 1

b. 6 1865 Mar 25-1867 Apr 30  
v. 1

b. 6 f. 1 **Reports** 1864 May-Aug

Reports from relief agents serving with the Army of the Potomac in Virginia about their activities, submitted to Lewis.

**Supply Department**

## I. Philadelphia Agency (cont.)

## General Office records (cont.)

## Supply Department (cont.)

**Letters received 1861-1863**

Letters from three disbound letterbooks regarding supplies donated by Pennsylvania and area aid societies; contents are primarily lists of items sent or invoices. Items are in a rough chronological order, with some undated and a few misfiles. Letterbooks from April 1863 through September 1865 are filed with the Women's Pennsylvania Branch Executive Committee records.

- b. 6 f. 2-10      1861 Nov 10-1862 Feb 28
- b. 7 f. 1-9      1862 Jan 17, Mar 4-Aug 28  
1862 Sep 2-1863 Mar 31
- b. 7 f. 10-16      1862 Sep 2-1863 Jan 31 and 1862, 1863 undated
- b. 8 f. 1-2      1863 Feb 2-Mar 31
- b. 8 f. 3      **Supplies received 1861 Nov-Dec**  
Copies of invoices of supplies received from Philadelphia and surrounding areas; entries list date, sender, items and quantities.
- b. 8 f. 4-8      **Invoice books**
- b. 8 f. 4-8      1862 Dec 12-1865 Nov 24 (5 volumes)  
Record of supplies forwarded, with invoice number, to the Washington Office and other USSC locations including Gettysburg, Harrisburg, Baltimore, New York, and Virginia. Also included are supplies issued to Philadelphia area hospitals and for individual or special relief; some of these entries are duplicated in Women's Pennsylvania Branch issue books. Most issues after September 1864 are local, and include order numbers starting in July 1865. See foreign invoice book below for supplies forwarded to other areas.
- v. 1      **Foreign invoice book 1864 Aug 31-1865 Aug 10**  
Record of supplies forwarded, with invoice number, to USSC locations outside the Philadelphia area including the Washington Office, Louisville, Baltimore, New York, Harpers Ferry, Annapolis, Point Lookout, and City Point and Bermuda Hundred, Virginia.
- Bill books 1862-1867**  
Record of billed expenses including supplies purchased, rent, advertising fees, utilities, shipping and printing. Entries list date, vendor, invoice charges, and amount.
- b. 9 f. 1      1862 Dec 9-1864 Jan 1  
Volume also includes "Foreign Invoices" (packing lists) 1863 Jul 3-15 of supplies received from outside of the Philadelphia system (New York, Woman's Central Association of Relief, New England Women's Auxiliary Association).
- v. 2      1864 Jan 1-1865 Jun 13
- v. 3      1865 Jun 14-1867 May 17

**Special Relief Department**

Most loose documents for the Department were numbered and endorsed by the Archive Department. Letters are listed individually in an Archive Department register (see USSC New York, N.Y. Archives volume 18; MssCol 22263); the remaining numbered items are listed by category. Telegrams to the General Office (#585-586, 591), mistakenly included in Special Relief Department records by the Archive Department, have been removed to the General Office's records. Orders for supplies from Soest to the Women's Pennsylvania Branch (#592-613) were listed as destroyed by the Archive Department.

- b. 9 f. 2-4      **Letters (#1-74) 1864 Apr-1865 Aug**  
Letters mostly to Soest (also to Morton) mostly regarding individual special relief cases and supplies, from USSC offices and branches, area hospitals, military offices and others. Some are in German.
- Applications (#75-115, 289-467) 1863-1865**  
Requests, mostly from area hospitals or military agents, for clothing and transport for individual soldiers. Also includes requests from Soest to Morton for individuals at the Soldiers' Lodge.
- b. 9 f. 5      1863 Dec-1864 Dec (#75-115)
- b. 9 f. 6-12      1865 Jan-Aug (#289-467)

I. Philadelphia Agency (cont.)  
Special Relief Department (cont.)

**Requisition and receipts (#116-259, 468-582) 1863 Dec-1865 Aug**

Requests for supplies from area hospitals and soldiers' aid establishments; also some acknowledgments from hospitals of supplies received  
Items 147-155 have two documents for each number.

b. 9 f. 13-16 1863 Dec-1864 Oct (#116-230)

b. 10 f. 1 1864 Oct-Dec (#231-259)

b. 10 f. 2-5 1865 Jan-Aug (#468-582)

**Receipts (#583-584) 1863-1865**

Invoices of supplies received at area hospitals and soldiers' aid establishments, signed by recipient and returned to Special Relief Department office.

b. 10 f. 6-15 1863 Dec-1864 Dec and 1864 undated (#583)

b. 10 f. 16-17 1865 Jan-Feb (#584)

b. 11 f. 1-5 1865 Mar-Aug (#584)

b. 11 f. 6-13 **Hospital reports (#260-288) 1863 Feb-Jul**

Lists of patients (name and regiment) at area U.S. general hospitals for the day or week ending. Most note admissions only; medical condition is not provided. Some reports show evidence of use by Philadelphia Hospital Directory staff.

b. 12 f. 1-12 **Orders for transportation (#587-590) 1865 May-Aug**

Orders to ticket agents at Camden & Amboy Railroad (#587) and Pennsylvania Railroad (#588-590) for passage for individual soldiers and others.

**Monthly reports 1863-1865**

Reports created by Soest and later, Morton, typically consisting of a narrative summary, tabulated statements of special relief cases and supplies issued, and cash accounts. Also present are lists of vouchers for transportation or subsistence money distributed, noting date, destination or type of aid, amount, and signature of recipient. From September 1864 forward, these are included with monthly cash accounts.

b. 12 f. 13-30 1863 Dec-1864 Aug

b. 13 f. 1 Vouchers 1864 Feb-Aug

b. 13 f. 2-13 1864 Sep-1865 Aug

b. 13 f. 14 **Condensed reports of supplies issued 1864**

Separate tabulated statements for issues to general hospitals, men at general hospitals, individual soldiers and state agents, and volunteer organizations, for the calendar year.

v. 4 **Register 1864 Sep 1-1865 Aug 19**

Record of special relief given to soldiers in the Philadelphia area. Chronological entries include date, name, regiment and company, previous location, supply items or money received, and usually remarks about state of health, military status, and other circumstances. Also includes occasional entries of supplies issued to area hospitals or soldiers' facilities.

**Journals**

Journals kept by Soest. Chronological entries detail visits to Philadelphia area hospitals, soldiers' aid establishments and discharged soldiers at home in Philadelphia, with descriptions of soldiers' circumstances and needs with course of action taken, including orders for supplies to be issued.

b. 13 f. 15-16 1863 Dec 17-1864 Sep 12

b. 14 f. 1 1864 Sep 13-1865 Aug 19

**Soldiers' Lodge**

v. 5 **Register of admissions 1865 May 13-Nov 11**

Chronological entries include date, name, regiment and company, residence, reason for and length of stay, date of discharge, and remarks.

b. 14 f. 2 **Meals and lodgings 1865 May 13-Nov 15**

Chronological record tabulating the number of meals and lodgings provided to soldiers and employees.



## I. Philadelphia Agency (cont.)

## Special Relief Department (cont.)

## Soldiers' Lodge (cont.)

- b. 14 f. 3 **Supplies received** 1865 May 12-Nov 15  
Supplies received and purchased with quantities, items, and amounts listed; also includes supplies issued for November 11.
- b. 14 f. 4 **Supplies issued** 1865 May 14-Nov 11  
Clothing and medical supplies (canes, crutches, and slings) issued to soldiers. Chronological entries include date, soldiers' name and regiment, and the number of items issued, tabulated by type, with totals.
- b. 14 f. 5 **Memorandum book** 1865 Jul 13-Nov 18  
Chronological record of activities kept by Soest including special relief and transportation money given out, correspondence received, personnel, special cases, and deaths.
- b. 14 f. 6 **Cash book** 1865 May-Dec  
Receipts and disbursements including separate accounts for lodge furnishings and services, and supply inventories.
- b. 14 f. 7 **Building papers** 1865 Feb-Dec  
Documents related to the construction of the Lodge and to the lot, including estimates, specifications, and an oversize plan.
- o. 1 **Building papers**  
Lodge plan  
Separated document

**Bureau of Employment**

- b. 14 f. 8-13 **Letters received** 1865 Nov 13-1866 Aug 24  
Disbound letterbook with no index. Letters are chronological and are mostly from soldiers seeking employment.
- Application registers**  
Registers of applications received from soldiers seeking employment and from employers seeking employees.
- Applications for employment**  
Registers of applications received from soldiers and sailors seeking employment. Chronological entries include date; applicant number; name and residence; military rank, regiment, and company or naval service; age and family information (lists only the type of family and number of any children, or 'no family'); nationality; disability; occupation and qualifications; references; and remarks (usually whether employment was obtained or not). Applicant numbers are used in applications from employers and index volumes below.
- v. 6 **1865 Nov 27-1866 Mar 27 (# 1-1584)**
- v. 7 **1866 Mar 27-1867 Jan 12 (# 1585-2008)**
- v. 8 **Name index**  
Entries are in alphabetical order by first letter of surname.
- v. 9 **Applications from employers** 1865 Nov 27-1867 Jan 29  
Register of employers seeking employees. Chronological entries include date, number, name (personal or corporate) and address, occupation, qualifications sought, and remarks. Numbers in remarks column refer to applicant numbers in above registers. Volume also includes a closing report (pp. 42-46) providing a history of the Bureau and statements totaling the number of applicants (by disability category) and number employed.

## II. Women's Pennsylvania Branch 1862-1865 (14 boxes)

### Creator history

The Women's Pennsylvania Branch worked closely with the Philadelphia Agency in its supply and relief efforts, operating from the same premises at 1307 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia. The Branch's primary function was to procure supplies from soldiers' aid societies throughout Pennsylvania (except in areas covered by the Pittsburg Branch, which was affiliated with the USSC's Western Department), southern New Jersey, and Delaware, and to prepare and stock the supplies for further distribution. The Branch also supported the Agency's special relief services for soldiers and sailors in the Philadelphia area, and provided employment and provisions for dependent female family members of servicemen.

The Branch was organized following a speech by Rev. Henry W. Bellows in Philadelphia on February 24, 1863. Its officers were Caleb Cope (treasurer of the Philadelphia Associates and its Agency), president and treasurer, and Robert M. Lewis (general superintendent of the Philadelphia Agency), secretary. Maria Grier was elected chairman of the Branch's Executive Committee and Clara J. Moore corresponding secretary. Louisa Lee Schuyler, of the Woman's Central Association of Relief, was active in the early organization of the Branch.

Branch work was directed by a Board of Managers, consisting of the Executive Committee, Special Relief Committee, and Finance Committee, Branch officers, and other members at large. The Finance Committee appears to have been mostly inactive following the spring of 1863. Committees and some local aid societies presented reports at monthly Board meetings.

The Philadelphia Agency's Supply Department was transferred to the Women's Pennsylvania Branch on March 26, 1863, and was absorbed by the Branch's Executive Committee, which handled most supply activities. The Branch's storeroom was located at 1307 Chestnut Street. They also handled the local distribution of supplies in Philadelphia, mostly from orders of the Philadelphia Agency's Special Relief Department. The Philadelphia Agency continued to handle the receipt and forwarding of supplies to and from other USSC locations. Both organizations worked closely together.

The Committee on Correspondence was formed in December 1864 following the resignation of the Executive Committee's corresponding secretary Clara J. Moore. The Committee was also identified as the Committee on Supplies and Diffusion of Information (or Knowledge.) The new Committee handled correspondence with associate managers, assessing the status of current aid societies, creating new societies, and promoting supply contributions. Upon creation of the committee, the Branch's auxiliary supply system was divided into nine sections comprising 49 counties in Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey, and Delaware. Each of the nine committee members was a corresponding secretary for a section. The Branch had over 350 aid societies in its network by the end of the war; the number of associate managers eventually totaled 56.

The Women's Pennsylvania Branch also provided special relief assistance to soldiers and their families during the war. In April 1863, special relief work conducted by the Philadelphia Agency for area servicemen was turned over to the Branch's Special Relief Committee, who administered activities through November, with partial financial support from the Agency. In December 1863, the Philadelphia Agency resumed control of most area special relief work for soldiers and sailors, and expanded its services under a new Special Relief Department. The Branch filled Department supply orders for distribution to Army camps and hospitals, the Agency's Soldiers' Lodge, individual servicemen, and others.

The Branch's Special Relief Committee (also known as the Relief Committee) then focused its efforts on providing families of soldiers and sailors in the Philadelphia area with employment and provisions, especially coal. Their extensive garment-making program eventually employed over 800 wives, mothers, and daughters of servicemen, many of them widows or wives of discharged disabled servicemen. Garments produced were distributed mostly through the Commission, but also to freedmen's aid associations and other charities. These activities, however, have minimal representation in the records.

With the exception of some work carried on by the Relief Committee, operations of the Women's Pennsylvania Branch were closed by January 1, 1866, according to the Report of the General Superintendent of the Philadelphia Branch of the U.S. Sanitary Commission to the Executive Committee (Philadelphia: King & Baird, 1866).

#### Scope and content note

The Women's Pennsylvania Branch Archives, 1862-1865, document the supply procurement and distribution activities of the Branch as carried out by its Executive Committee, the Committee's Corresponding Secretary, and the Committee of Correspondence, under the direction of the Board of Managers. The Branch's special relief work, particularly the distribution of supplies for the Philadelphia Agency's Special Relief Department, is represented to a lesser extent.

The Executive Committee's supply correspondence and record books provide a detailed record of the daily receipt and storage of supplies received from aid societies, for further shipment or for distribution in the Philadelphia area. The Committee's direction of branch and aid society organizational matters, promotion of supply donations, and discernment of USSC supply needs are documented in the Branch's general correspondence, consisting of letters received by Moore, Grier and others, from USSC offices and branches, aid societies, and individuals. The reorganization and expansion of the Branch's network of aid societies by the Committee of Correspondence, and related canvassing efforts, are also represented in general correspondence, as well as in their minutes, and their reports to the Board of Managers. Executive Committee minutes largely concern appointments and resignations of members.

General management of Branch activities is documented in Board of Manager minutes; work conducted by committees and some local aid societies is also represented in reports submitted to the Board. Also present are brief minutes kept by R.M. Lewis of the Branch's annual meetings in 1864 and 1865 noting the election of officers, and Branch cash books.

There are no records for the Special Relief Committee other than reports to the Board of Managers, although the distribution of supplies for individual and special relief are found in supply records of the Executive Committee.

The Women's Pennsylvania Branch worked closely with the Philadelphia Agency in its supply and special relief efforts. The records of the Agency, arranged separately in this record group, also document the Sanitary Commission's activities in the Philadelphia area and the interconnectedness of the two organizations. Researchers may wish to consult the Agency's General Office Supply Department records, documenting contributions from aid societies prior to April 1863.

There is little material related to the Great Central Fair of June 1864 in the Women's Pennsylvania Branch's records, although many Branch members were involved in Fair work.

#### General correspondence 1863-1865

Letters received are from five disbound letterbooks. Most are to Corresponding Secretary Clara J. Moore, with some to Grier and others. After Moore's resignation, letters are addressed mainly to members of the Committee of Correspondence, formed in December 1864. Letters are from aid societies and associate managers regarding organizing, fundraising, and supplies; also from other USSC offices and branches, especially Alfred J. Bloor in the Washington Office, Louisa Lee Schuyler at Women's Central Association of Relief in New York, Abby May of the New England Women's Auxiliary Association, and branches in the Western Department regarding supplies needed, organizing strategies, and activities. Numerous letters from Anna M. Holstein describe her speaking tours, organizing, USSC news, and her activities in Annapolis and City Point. A few letters concern the Woman's Council in Washington (January 1864) and the Great Central Fair in Philadelphia (June 1864).

- b. 15 f. 1-9            1863 Mar 9-Sep 28
- b. 15 f. 10-14        1863 Oct 1-Dec 23
- b. 16 f. 1-4           1863 Dec 23-1864 Feb 29
- b. 16 f. 5-12         1864 Mar 2-Aug 29
- b. 2 f. 13-15         1864 Sep 1-Nov 18 and 1864 undated
- b. 17 f. 1-6          1864 Nov 19-1865 Feb 28 and 1864, 1865 undated
- b. 17 f. 7-11         1865 Mar 2-Oct 25

#### b. 17 f. 12    Annual meeting minutes 1864-1865

Brief minutes kept by Lewis for Branch meetings held in April 1864 and April 1865, with election results for officers and committee members.

#### Board of Managers

II. Women's Pennsylvania Branch (cont.)

Board of Managers (cont.)

Minutes

Minutes of monthly meetings with reports from committees and other Branch business. Both volumes contain lists of members with names and addresses.

b. 17 f. 13      1863 Feb 27-1865 Mar 6

b. 17 f. 14      1865 Apr 3-Dec 11

Meeting reports

Reports of the Executive and Special Relief Committees, the Committee on Correspondence, and various aid societies, and special committees and resolutions, presented to the Board of Managers at monthly meetings. Reports are filed chronologically by Board meeting date within each committee.

b. 18 f. 1-9      Executive Committee 1863 Apr-1865 Dec

b. 18 f. 10-13      Special Relief Committee 1863 Apr-1865 Dec

Committee on Correspondence

Reports also include those of the corresponding secretaries to the committee

b. 18 f. 14-17      1865 Jan-Apr

b. 19 f. 1-3      1865 May-Dec

b. 19 f. 4      Aid societies 1863 Apr-1864 Oct

Includes Hebrew Women's Aid Society, Industrial Branch, St. Luke's Auxiliary Society, Women's Contributing Aid, and St. Mark's Soldiers' Aid Society.

b. 19 f. 5      Special committees and resolutions 1863 Apr-1865 May

Executive Committee

b. 19 f. 6      Minutes 1863 Mar 2-1865 Jun 5

Meeting minutes consisting mostly of resignations and nominations.

Supply correspondence 1863-1865

Letters received from aid societies regarding supply shipments and contents, including packing lists or invoices, from 11 disbound letterbooks. Items are roughly chronological with many items undated. There are no indexes. This set of letterbooks continues the series of Supply Department letterbooks (1861 Nov-1863 Mar) in the Philadelphia Agency records.

b. 19 f. 7-13      1863 Apr 2-May 30

1863 Jun 1-Jul 31

b. 19 f. 14-16      1863 Jun 1- Jul 6 and 1863 undated

b. 20 f. 1-7      1863 Jul 7-31 and 1863 undated

b. 20 f. 8-16      1863 Aug 1-Oct 31

b. 21 f. 1-9      1863 Nov 2-1864 Jan 30

1864 Feb 1-Apr 30

b. 21 f. 10-15      1864 Feb 1-Mar 31 and 1864 undated

b. 22 f. 1-3      1864 Apr 1-30 and 1864 undated

b. 22 f. 4-13      1864 Apr 26-Jun 30

1864 Jul 1-Aug 31

b. 22 f. 14-16      1864 Jul 1-Aug 11 and 1864 undated

b. 23 f. 1-5      1864 Aug 1-31 and 1864 undated

b. 23 f. 6-13      1864 Sep 1-Nov 30

1864 Dec 1-1865 Feb 27

b. 23 f. 14-15      1864 Dec 1-15 and 1864 undated

b. 24 f. 1-7      1864 Dec 16-1865 Feb 27, undated

1865 Mar 1-Apr 29

## II. Women's Pennsylvania Branch (cont.)

## Executive Committee (cont.)

## Supply correspondence (cont.)

1865 Mar 1-Apr 29 (cont.)

b. 24 f. 8-14 1865 Mar 1-Apr 12 and 1865 undated

b. 25 f. 1-3 1865 Apr 13-29 and 1865 undated

b. 25 f. 4-9 1865 May 3-Sep 19

**Supplies received 1863-1865**

Most supplies are from soldiers' aid societies in the Branch's network; some are from individual donors or churches, or were purchased. Supplies received were processed in stages by the Branch. General shipment information was first recorded in daily entry books, then a more detailed listing of items received in each shipment was entered into invoice books. Supplies received were also entered by type in stock ledgers, below.

b. 28 f. 1-3 **Daily entry books 1863 Mar 29-1865 Nov 12**

Record of supply shipments received daily including sender, number of packages, date received, and acknowledgment date with initials.

**Invoice books**

Record of supplies received with date received, sender, and items with quantities listed. Invoice book 1863 Dec 1-1864 Jan 22 was partially burned in the Branch's storeroom fire of January 24, 1864.

b. 25 f. 10-12 1863 Mar 27-1864 Jan 22

b. 26 f. 1-3 1864 Jan 22-1865 Nov 12

**Issue books**

Record of supplies issued to area hospitals, and for individual or special relief, most by order of Philadelphia Agency's special relief agent Colonel Clement Soest. Entries include date issued, recipient, items with quantities, and order number beginning with December 26, 1863. Supplies issued were also entered by type in stock ledgers, below.

b. 26 f. 4-7 1863 Apr 1-1865 Jul 8

b. 27 f. 1 1865 Jul 8-Nov 20

**Stock ledgers**

Supplies listed by type in ledger format, with stock on hand and received (from aid societies, donations, and purchases) on the left, and supplies issued and forwarded on the right, identifying general recipients, each in chronological order. Recipients include the Washington Office and other USSC locations at Harpers Ferry and Virginia; Philadelphia area hospitals, and for special relief. These volumes were referred to as stock ledgers.

b. 28 f. 4 1863 Mar 28-Sep 26

b. 27 f. 2-3 1864 Jan 23-1865 Nov 20

**Work books**

In addition to procuring supplies, many aid societies sewed garments and made bedding for soldiers. Volumes pre-date in part the formation of the Women's Pennsylvania Branch.

b. 27 f. 4 1862 Dec 27-1863 Jun 27

Account of material issued to individuals and aid societies and items returned, by date. Entries for material issued include date, recipient, type and quantity of material; items returned (clothing, bedding) include date, from whom, type and quantity of pieces returned. Entries are chronological within each section. Also includes accounts of material purchased or furnished by the USSC for special relief work and articles returned.

b. 27 f. 5 1862 Dec 27-1863 Jun 17

Account of material issued and items returned, by name.

b. 27 f. 6-7 **Cash books 1864 Feb 2-1865 Aug 29**

Receipts and disbursements, each in chronological order, for Wilson J. Carver, storekeeper at 1307 Chestnut Street, in account with the Women's Pennsylvania Branch.

b. 27 f. 8 **Committee on Correspondence minutes 1864 Oct-1865 Jun**

Minutes of committee meetings consist mostly of reports from corresponding secretaries for each section. See Board of Managers records for original corresponding secretary reports.

### III. Gettysburg and Harrisburg 1863-1865 (1 box)

In June 1863, the Sanitary Commission began making preparations in Pennsylvania and Maryland for a seemingly imminent battle. Agents were sent to Harrisburg, Frederick, Chambersburg, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and supplies were accumulated at various locations around the area.

Immediately following the battle at Gettysburg on July 1-3, the Commission moved wagon loads of supplies from Washington and Baltimore into the area via Westminster and Frederick. Agents set up relief and store tents, and provided food, clothing, and medicine for the thousands of wounded left behind by both Union and Confederate forces. Supplies continued to arrive via railroad primarily from Washington, Philadelphia, and Baltimore; the USSC's Agency for the Purchase of Fresh Hospital Supplies also sent fresh food in refrigerated cars. Sanitary Commission agents under the supervision of Dr. Gordon Winslow in Gettysburg issued supplies directly to the various hospitals in the Gettysburg area, and also conducted inquiries for the USSC's Hospital Directory. Activities continued at Gettysburg into November 1863.

In mid-August 1864, a Soldiers' Rest was opened in Harrisburg, a major railroad center, closing in January 1865; C.R. Ferguson was superintendent for most of this time. A second Soldiers' Rest was opened on March 28, 1865, with W.H. Hadley as superintendent, and was in operation until at least August 1865.

The Gettysburg and Harrisburg Archives, 1863-1865, consist mostly of records of supplies issued and received at the two locations. Harrisburg material also includes registers for the Soldiers' Rest.

#### Gettysburg

Supplies issued are for U.S. hospitals in the Gettysburg area, under the Hospital Fund account. Entries, listing items delivered or copying supply orders by surgeons, are arranged roughly by hospital and are in chronological order within. Entries for supplies received usually include date of invoice, packing or invoice number, contents, date received and initials

Arrangement of supply records below reflects original physical condition and use; volumes were later disbound, bundled and variously labelled during the USSC's post-war arrangements. From notations it appears that a new set of books was created Aug 7-8, 1863; there is some cross-over of dates and use for other purposes.

- b. 29 f. 1      **Supplies issued 1863 Jul 25-Aug 9, Aug 22**  
Paginated with index. Many pages, presumably empty, were removed. Some August entries were transferred to the following volume.
- b. 29 f. 2      **Supplies issued 1863 Aug 7-Nov 3**
- b. 29 f. 3      **Supplies received and cash account 1863 Jul-Nov**  
Supplies received 1863 Jul 3-Aug 8; cash account for receipts and disbursements, including staff expenses, 1863 Jul 17-Nov 3.
- b. 29 f. 4      **Supplies received 1863 Aug 7-Sep 14**
- b. 29 f. 5      **Tyson Brothers circular**  
Advertisement by the Tyson Brothers, Gettysburg photographers, for their set of photographic Views from the Battle Field of Gettysburg July 1st, 2d and 3d, 1863.

#### Harrisburg

- b. 29 f. 6      **Supplies issued and received 1864 Aug 8-1865 Jan**  
Supplies issued are to area hospitals and for individual relief; entries list date, recipient, quantities and items. Supplies received (beginning from the opposite end of the volume) are from Philadelphia; entries list date, quantities and items. Also present are loose invoices of supplies received and shipped at Harrisburg (1864 Oct-1865 Jan) and a cash account (1 sheet) of C.R. Ferguson 1864 Sep-1865 Jan.
- b. 29 f. 7      **Soldiers' Rest register 1864 Aug-1865 Jan**  
Admission entries, 1864 Aug 12-1865 Jan 13, list date, name, state and regiment; some also include number of lodgings, meals, and wounds dressed. The volume also contains cash accounts, 1864 Sep-1865 Jan; supplies received from Philadelphia, 1864 Sep-1865 Jan; and supplies issued to hospitals and for individual relief, 1864 Sep-Dec. Accounts and supplies follow register entries within each month.

III. Gettysburg and Harrisburg (cont.)  
Harrisburg (cont.)

- b. 29 f. 8      **Soldiers' Rest register of admissions 1865 Mar 28-Aug 13**  
Entries (on pre-printed, loose sheets) list number; name; rank, company, and regiment; residence; traveling from and to; status; aid rendered; and remarks.

IV. Canvassing and Supply Department 1862-1865 (14 boxes)

The Canvassing and Supply Department opened in October 1864 and was based in Philadelphia at 1307 Chestnut Street. Although housed in the same building as the Philadelphia Agency and the Women's Pennsylvania Branch, the Department operated independently from them; it reported to the associate secretary in the Central Office at Washington.

Led by superintendent Dr. Joseph Parrish (1818-1891), the Department organized canvassing agents who would visit all state branches and auxiliaries in the East, hold meetings, distribute literature, and provide information on supplies most needed. Publication of the revamped Sanitary Bulletin was also transferred to the Canvassing and Supply Department. In addition, the Department appears to have been in charge of printing blank forms and ledgers for the USSC.

Other personnel included the Rev. John A. Anderson (1834-1892) as canvasser and later, registrar, and C.M. Rathbun as clerk; the Department also included over twenty canvassers, many of them clergymen.

The Canvassing and Supply Department Archives, 1862-1865, document the department's canvassing and publication activities and include letters received and reports from canvassers, material published in the Sanitary Bulletin, and copies of letters sent by Parrish and Anderson. Also present is a diary kept by departmental personnel, a Pennsylvania county directory, copies of USSC's Standing Committee minutes, and financial records.

**Letters and reports**

These consist mostly of letters sent to Canvassing and Supply personnel, especially Parrish (also to Anderson, and, occasionally, Rathbun); canvassing reports; and copies of reports of other USSC agencies, copies or extracts from letters, and articles submitted for publication in the Bulletin. Letters to Parrish are mostly from other USSC personnel and branches, or from canvassers, and concern canvassing, the Bulletin, or USSC procedures. Some items predate the formation of the department. In particular, a number of letters to Anderson are related to his tenure as relief agent in the Army of the Potomac until October 1864 when he joined the Canvassing and Supply staff at Philadelphia. Some letters addressed to Parrish and others also predate the department's formation. Several items are letterpress copies. Item #606 is a photograph of a plan for a railroad ambulance.

Items were numbered and endorsed by the USSC's Archive Department. The Archive Department register includes two inventories (the first is incomplete). See USSC New York, N.Y. record group, volume 18 (MssCol 22263)

- b. 30 f. 1-17      1862-1864 Oct and 1864 undated (#1-143)
- b. 31 f. 1-17      1864 Oct-Nov and 1864 undated (#144-308)
- b. 32 f. 1-15      1864 Nov-Dec, 1865 Mar and 1864 undated (#309-461)
- b. 33 f. 1-17      1864 Dec-1865 Jan and undated (#462-602)
- b. 34 f. 1-15      1864 Sep-1865 Feb undated (#603-737)
- b. 35 f. 1-14      1865 Jan-Feb and 1865 undated (#738-906)
- b. 36 f. 1-15      1864 Mar-1865 and 1865 undated (#907-1064)
- b. 37 f. 1-18      1865 Feb-Apr and 1865 undated (#1065-1262)
- b. 38 f. 1-17      1865 Mar-Apr and 1865 undated (#1263-1465)
- b. 39 f. 1-14      1865 Apr-Jun and 1865 undated (#1466-1631)
- b. 40 f. 1-10      1865 Jan-Aug and 1865 undated (#1632-1695)
- b. 40 f. 11-14      1863 Feb-Mar and undated (#1696-1736)

Letters sent (Letterpress copybooks)

IV. Canvassing and Supply Department (cont.)

Letters sent (cont.)

**Joseph Parrish**

Copies of letters sent, mostly by Parrish. Most letters are to other USSC branch and office personnel, and to canvassers, and regard canvassing, lectures, branch activities, the Bulletin, printing work, post-war plans and activities, and the gathering of material for USSC histories. Occasional letters are by Rathbun or John Marshall Paul, often in Parrish's absence. Volume indexes are alphabetical by first initial of surname.

b. 41  
v. 1-2      **1864 Sep 22-1865 Aug 31**

b. 41  
v. 3      **Letters to California 1865 Mar 17-Jul 24**

Copies of letters by Parrish (and one by Anderson) to O.C. Wheeler, Secretary of the USSC's California Branch. Letters concern USSC history and activities, and were to be used for promotional purposes for fundraising in California. Most originals are in the USSC California Branch record group (MssCol 18580).

b. 41 f. 1      **Loose documents**

**John A. Anderson**

Copies of letters sent by Anderson to other USSC personnel regarding departmental activities, the Bulletin and other publications, the printing of forms and registers, and finances. Some are written on behalf of Parrish in his absence. Indexes are alphabetical by first initial of surname.

b. 41  
v. 4      **1864 Dec 13-1865 Apr 17**

b. 42  
v. 1      **1865 Apr-Aug**

Letters by Anderson, Apr 17-Jun 14; by Parrish and Rathbun Jul 20-Aug 8 (three letters at end of volume, running in reverse).

b. 42  
v. 2      **1865 Jun 8-Aug 31**

Most by Anderson; some by Rathbun or Paul. Many letters concern the winding up of departmental activities and settling of accounts, and plans for the formation of a USSC Historical Bureau.

b. 42 f. 1      **Diary 1865 Jan 10-Apr 11**

Journal of departmental activities kept by Anderson and Rathbun detailing correspondence, Bulletin work, and printing. Entries through Jan 19 are initialed by author; the remaining entries are by Anderson.

b. 42 f. 2      **Subscribers to the Bulletin**

Names and addresses for subscribers in New York, Boston, and elsewhere, listed alphabetically by first letter within each (except Boston).

b. 42 f. 3      **Directory**

Directory of Pennsylvania counties, roughly alphabetical with index, some with persons and towns listed within. Most likely related to the distribution of the Bulletin.

b. 42 f. 4-9      **Standing Committee minutes 1865 Mar-Aug (Copies)**

Copies of minutes for USSC Standing Committee meetings 1865 Mar 14-Aug 23, most on letterpress copy paper. Also includes printed minutes of USSC Board meeting for the twenty-first session (1865 Apr 18-21).

**Financial records 1864 Oct-1865 Nov**

b. 43 f. 1      **Ledger 1864 Oct-1865 Nov**

Departmental account with the Sanitary Commission, with accounts for salaries, cash, expenses, the Bulletin, printing costs and individual personnel. Volume includes an alphabetical index of accounts.

b. 43 f. 2      **Cash book 1864 Oct-1865 Nov**

Receipts and disbursements for the Department, each in chronological order in account with the Sanitary Commission, pp. 1-45; disbursements only for salaries and expenses, pp. 150-166. Numbers in the first two columns refer respectively to the page number and date of the month in the ledger above.

b. 43 f. 3      **Cash book 1865 Apr-May**

Disbursements by account, primarily against staff salaries and expenses, as well as office and Bulletin expenses, with alphabetical index. May 1865 entries conform to volume below.



IV. Canvassing and Supply Department (cont.)  
Financial records (cont.)

b. 43 f. 4

**Cash book 1865 May**

Receipts and disbursements, each in chronological order, kept by Anderson in account with the Department.