

McCrary Family Civil War Correspondence



Postmarked Madison C.H. FLA. Nov. 29, [1864], CDS Paid 10, Type C, on Wallpaper cover to Mrs. McCrary from her son, Edward McCrary based at Camp Lay, Florida.

The purpose of this exhibition is to show a Civil War family correspondence between patriarch Edward McCrary, Sr. Esq., his wife, Louisa Rebecca Lane, sons John, Edward, Jr. and Thomas. This exhibit will follow each family member chronologically during the war. Some dates are determined by enclosures and the known whereabouts of the participants.

PLAN OF EXHIBIT

1. Edward McCrary, Sr., Esq. (1802-1892), a prominent attorney in Charleston, too old to fight for the Confederacy, opposed secession but eventually signed the Ordinance of Secession and supported his son's endeavors toward the fight. (Pages 2-7)
2. John McCrary (1831-1881), oldest son and Major in the Confederate Corps of Engineers was transferred early to Savannah where he spent the entire war devising the defenses around Savannah, including the construction of Fort McAlister, which was never taken by storm from the sea, despite many attempts. (Pages 8-12)
3. Edward McCrary, Jr. (1833-1903), as Captain raised the first company in the Confederacy, the Meagher Guards, that enlisted for the *whole* war. He fought in most of the major early battles and was wounded several times, so severely in 1863 that he spent a year in recovery and was sent as a lieutenant colonel to be the commandant of Camp Lay in Madison, Florida, a military camp of instruction, in March of 1864. (Pages 13-15)
4. Thomas McCrary (1843-1882), immediately signed up for service as an eighteen-year-old lieutenant but was so severely wounded in the Battle of Second Manassas in August 1862, that he had to resign from the military. His brother, Edward was wounded in the same battle. (Page 16)

Key items are outlined in crimson.

Edward McCrady, Sr., Esq.



Jacksonville, Fla, June 18, 1861 CDS postmark: PAID 5 type A rate struck twice. The known example.

The enclosed letter is from Susan L'Engle informing her cousin by adoption, Edward McCrady, of the death of her brother-in-law. The note on the end of the cover is in the hand of the addressee. She was married to Edward McCrady L'Engle. Her husband's grandmother was Madeline L'Engle whose direct descendant was the present-day popular author by the same name who wrote over 50 books, including *A Wrinkle in Time*.

Edward McCrady, Sr., Esq.



CSA #11 tied by Camden, S.C. cancel on adversity cover to Edward McCrady, Sr., Esq.

The address was written on a flyer from the Episcopal Diocese of Texas to Edward McCrady but sent from SC, and most likely sent by a church member. Edward was heavily involved in the Episcopal Church in South Carolina, serving on the vestry of St. Philip's and St. Michael's Churches in Charleston.



CSA #12 manuscript cancelled South Santee, S.C. Oct 30, 1863 on a 4-page folded letter

A. Maryck, from a prominent Huguenot family, writes to and addresses the elder Edward McCrady, Sr. as "Dear Mac" meaning they were close, in fact probably childhood friends. They both went to Yale. The letter discusses Confederate taxes, complaining they are too high.

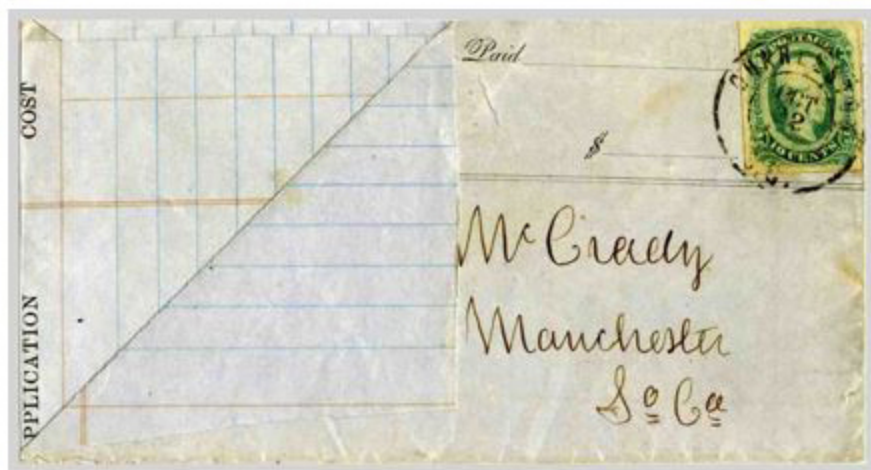
Edward McCrady, Sr., Esq.



Charleston, SC Oct, 25 CDS Drop cover with "2" [due] type H to Edward McCrady, Esq.

Edward McCrady became the oldest living graduate of Yale and opposed secession. However, he did sign the Ordinance of Secession of South Carolina.

Edward McCrady, Sr., Esq.



CSA #12C tied by Charleston, SC Oct 22 double circle CDS on adversity cover

Edward McCrady Sr. writes to his wife, Louisa de Berniere Lane McCrady who was residing at their "retreat" in Manchester in the Sand Hills area northwest of Charleston in Sumter County, which was used when the heat or war threatened.



Charleston, S.C. Jan 3 CDS Paid 10, type G written by McCrady, Sr. to his wife in Manchester

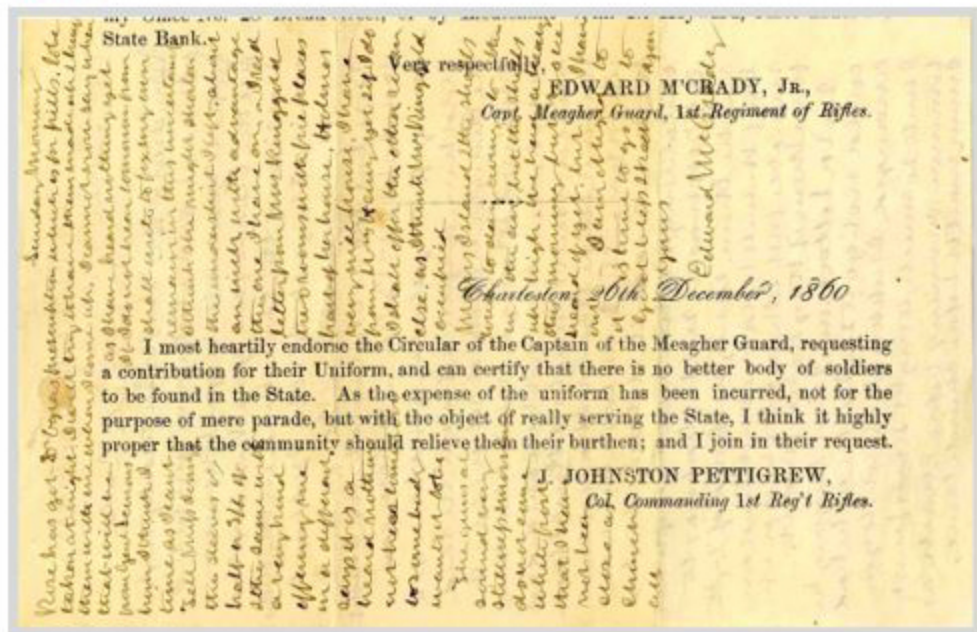
His wife, Louisa, was in ill-health and spent much of her time residing at their "retreat" in the higher and dryer "Sand Hills." They had fifteen children, only eight survived childhood.

Edward McCrady, Sr., Esq.

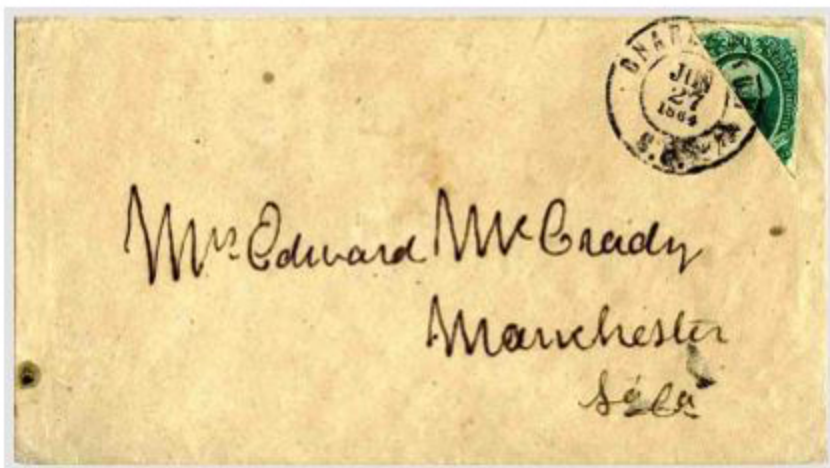


CSA #13 bisect Charleston, S.C. Nov 6 CDS with "10" type K due paid with 20c. bisect upon receipt

Edward McCrady, Sr. to his wife in Manchester, S.C. (enclosure). The enclosed letter below was written on a circular issued by McCrady's son, Edward, Jr. asking for support for the troops he was raising called the Meagher Guards. They were the first company raised for the Confederacy in enlist for the *whole* war. This page of the letter mentions Edward's nephew, William Henry [Trescott] who was President Buchanan's assistant Secretary of State.

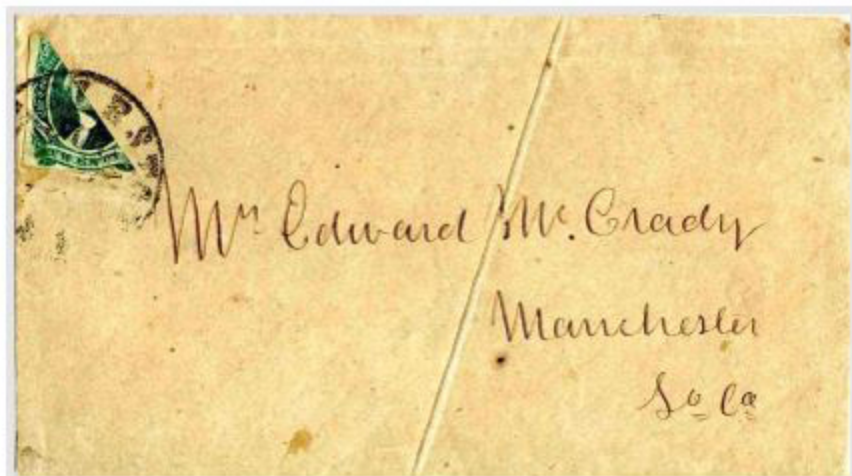


Edward McCrady, Sr., Esq.



CSA #13 bisect tied by Charleston, S.C. June 27, 1864 CDS written by Edward McCrady Sr. to his wife in Manchester, S.C.

When there is no enclosure for identity of sender, handwriting identified by McCrady family historian, Waring McCrady, is relied upon.



CSA #13 bisect tied by Charleston, S.C. postmark. Edward McCrady Sr. to his wife in Manchester, S.C.

Again, the elder McCrady writes his wife at their "retreat" home. Possibly the other half of the above bisect.

2. Captain John McCrady



Georgetown, S.C., August 27, 1861 CDS postmark: PAID 5 Type A. From McCrady to his brother.

Captain John McCrady was a Harvard educated professor of mathematics at the College of Charleston when the war broke out. He resigned and became a Captain in the Corps of Engineers. He writes to his brother (also an attorney) in care of the law firm where his father, of the same name, practices.



Georgetown, S.C., December 12, 1861 CDS postmark: PAID 5 Type A. From McCrady to his father.

McCrady requested permission to raise a company of sappers and Secretary of the Treasury Christopher Memminger recommended him to Secretary of War Judah Benjamin. Then in February 1862, McCrady was appointed chief engineer for the defenses of Savannah.

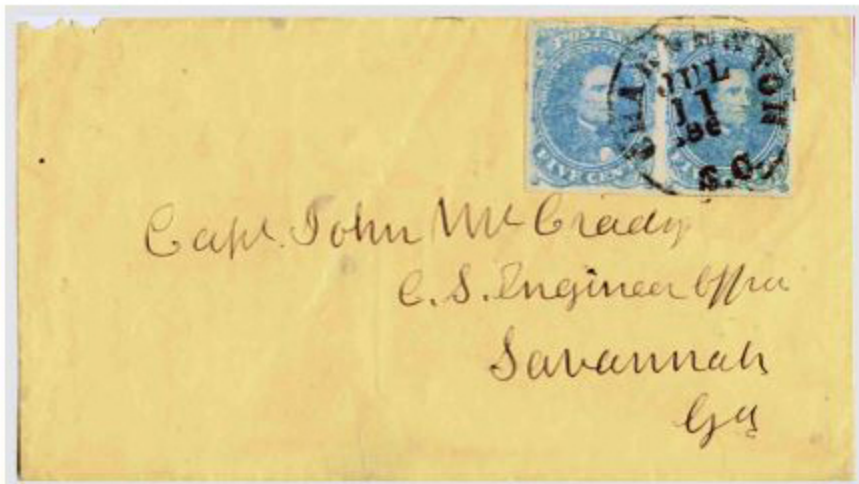
Captain John McCrady



CSA #12a tied with Charleston, S.C. June 22 CDS on turned cover to AH Dunkin, Esq. care of McCrady and forwarded back to Charleston, franked with CSA #12a tied with Savannah, Ga. PAID June 30 CDS cancel.

A.H. Dunkin was a childhood friend of John McCrady's father, Edward. They were both attorneys in Charleston. The letter was forwarded by John McCrady as the handwriting indicates. Verified by family historian, Waring McCrady. Note: the forwarding stamp is on the front and the original stamp is on the back.

Captain John McCrady



Pair CSA #4 tied by Charleston, S.C., July 11 CDS written by McCrady, Sr. to son John McCrady

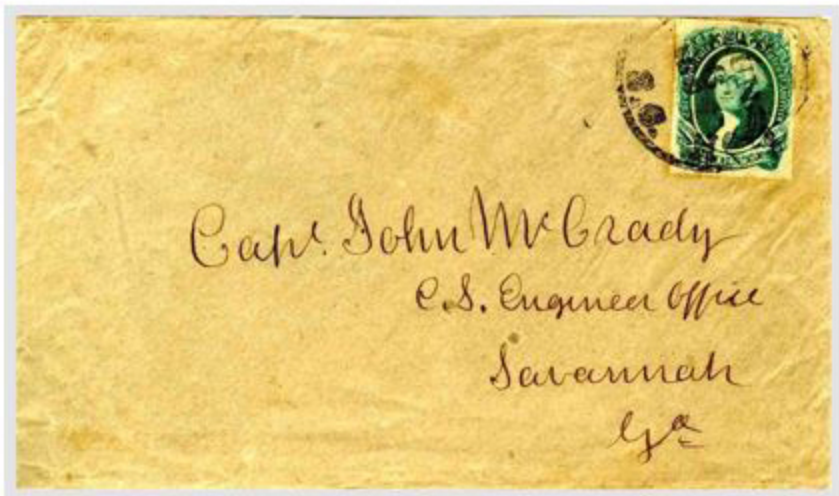
Captain John McCrady was noted for his defense of Savannah, fortifying the city with a ring of defenses, anchored by Fort McAllister at Genesis Point, a plantation owned by Lt. Col. Joseph McAllister at the mouth of the Ogeechee River.



Pair CSA #6 tied by Charleston, S.C. September 25 CDS written by McCrady, Sr. to John McCrady

Captain John McCrady's fortifications of Savannah prevented the city's capture from the sea for the entire war, despite seven assaults by the Yankee navy, including the largest naval shells ever fired by the US Navy during the war.

Captain John McCrady



CSA #13 tied by Charleston, S.C. June 6 CDS written by McCrady, Sr. to his son

In early 1865, McCrady was involved with the means and methods of enabling the Confederate troops to retreat northwards through North Carolina. After the war he tried raising and harvesting oysters in the Ashley River as a business, but it failed due to shipping problems.



CSA #13 bisect tied by Charleston, S.C. [1864] CDS written by McCrady, Sr. to son John

In the late 1860s, John McCrady briefly went back to teaching Mathematics at the College of Charleston. He increasingly became interested in Biology and was offered and accepted the position as head of the Biology Department at Harvard in 1873.

Captain John McCrady



CSA #11c tied on wallpaper cover to Capt. John McCrady at the Engineer's Office in Savannah, GA.

McCrady found life very unhappy as a former Confederate officer living in Boston and resigned his teaching position at Harvard, having been offered a similar job at Johns Hopkins.



CSA # 7-L pair tied with Charleston Nov. 30 CDS inverted month date on turned cover to John McCrady. Inside: CSA #12 manuscript postmark and no town of origin to John Johnson Sumterville, S.C.

McCrady decided against going to Johns Hopkins when he was offered the chance to go to the University of the South to start a Biology Department. In 1876 he moved his family to the campus at Sewanee, TN, where he died in 1886.

3. Edward McCrady, Jr., Esq.



Wallpaper cover, stamp removed, from Madison Florida [Aug. 10, 1864, enclosure]

Edward McCrady, Jr. Esq. (1833-1903) was educated at the College of Charleston and joined his father's law practice in 1855. When the war broke out he formed the first company to enlist for the entire war and headed to the First Battle of Bull Run as a Captain.



CSA #7-R Pair tied by dateless blue Richmond cancel on adversity cover from Edward Jr. to his father

Possibly written from Richmond when Edward was in the hospital recovering from malarial fever, contracted in the swamps of Chickahominy in June of 1862. The paper is a military requisition form of the German Riflemen, South Carolina, detailing various equipment used by soldiers at the front.

Edward McCrady, Jr., Esq.



CSA #11AD Type I tied with Madison C.H., FLA CDS June 27, [1864] on wallpaper

Captain McCrady was promoted Major, then to Lieutenant Colonel. He fought at Cold Harbor and Cedar Run but in 1862, he, along with his younger brother Thomas, were both severely wounded at Second Manassas. Edward recovered to fight at Fredericksburg. In early 1863, while resting after a skirmish, he was again injured by a falling tree, which fractured his skull and broke his collar bone. He lay unconscious for days and it was thought he might die. He recovered but was declared unfit for active duty.

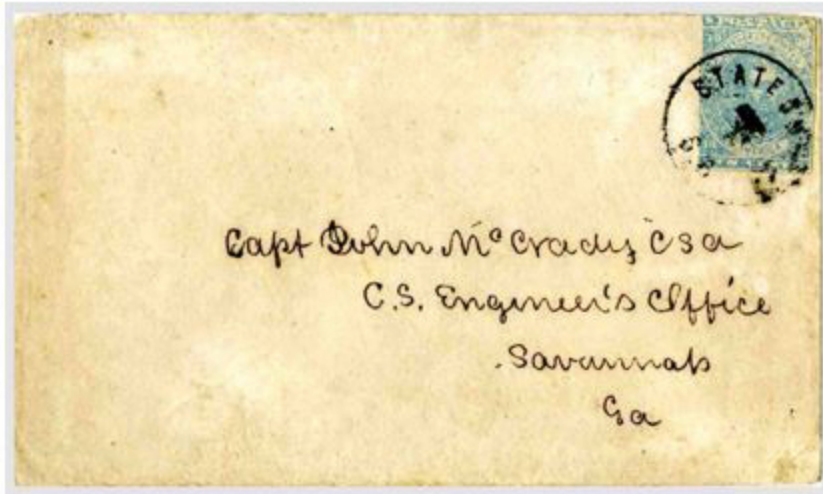
Edward McCrady, Jr, Esq.



Postmarked Madison C.H., FLA. Apr. 25 [1864], Paid 10, Type C, with Chg 29 box notation at top on wallpaper cover to Mrs. McCrady from her son, based at Camp Lay, Florida.

It was decided that McCrady was too severely wounded to continue in active duty, but he determined to stay in service and was commissioned Commandant of Camp Lay, a camp of instruction for new recruits in Madison, Florida in 1864. It is thought that this was a test camp for training blacks for the southern army. He was finally discharged with the rank of Colonel.

4. Lieutenant Thomas McCrady



CSA 2-P tied with Statesburg, S.C. CDS from Thomas McCrady to his brother John in Savannah

Thomas was only eighteen when he enlisted. He was severely wounded in 1862 at the Battle of Second Manassas, the same battle in which his brother Edward was also severely wounded. He was discharged and died at the early age of 38 in 1882.



McCrady House on South Battery Street, Charleston, S.C.

Thomas's younger brother Louis was too young to enlist at the beginning of the war but did in 1865, however it was too late for him to see any action. They lived in this house after the war and it remains in the family.