

Rick Barram, ed. Dear Uncles: The Civil Letters of Arthur McKinstry, A Soldier in the Excelsior Brigade. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2022. Paper. ISBN 978-1438489964 \$33.95.

Includes both manuscript and newspaper letters—Fredonia Censor

Private, third Excelsior regiment, 1861

Arthur would send letter home to his two uncles who would publish them

Born, November 2, 1839 in Chicopee, Mass.

Flunked out of the Naval Academy; visits to Mexico and New Orleans—health suffered

Enlisted in Third Excelsior Regiment, 72<sup>nd</sup> New York Infantry, Co. D—one of five regiments in Sickles brigade

Arthur's near weekly newspaper letters spread fame of the regiment

Opposed slavery but occasionally used racist terms

Co. D. Muster roll, 10-12

\*Headnotes to each chapter—highlights

Drilling, good comrades, photograph, 13

Companies leaving for New York, women made clothes for the soldiers, 15

Staten Island, 17

Drill and dress parade, admired by crowd, 17

\*Also includes "other voices" about the regiment that appeared in newspapers

Women and food, 18

Other letters from camp, 21-22

Poor coffee, 23

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Camp quarters, 24

Jocular complaints about food, 24-25

Finds other soldiers ragged and disreputable, 25

Deserter, 26

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