

In the Spirit of Clara Barton: Almira Fales and the Women of South Danvers



Almira Fales in 1863

The exhibit, *In the Spirit of Clara Barton: Almira Fales and the Women of South Danvers*, presents, for the first time ever, letters sent to Eunice Cook, the founder of the South Danvers Ladies Soldiers' Aid Society, from women who worked with the wounded in hospitals and on the battlefields during the Civil War.

The South Danvers Ladies Soldiers' Aid Society was the third to be formed in the Union. It was created on April 24, 1861 and the women immediately set to work organizing a shipment of clothing and bandages for the Salem Light Infantry who had been sent to Washington, D.C.. It was not long after when the government recognized the necessity of creating an agency equipped to deal with the massive numbers of wounded. On June 9, 1861, the United States Sanitary Commission was formed. With the efforts of thousands of Ladies Soldiers' Aid Societies throughout the Union, they were able to supply food, clothing and medical supplies for the hundreds of thousands of wounded men.

When an appeal from Almira Fales, one of the first women to provide aid to the wounded, was announced in the September 25, 1861 *South Danvers Wizard*, the South Danvers Ladies Soldiers' Aid Society responded. It didn't take long before a friendship formed between Eunice Cook, the founder of the Society, and Almira Fales.

In addition to the Society's efforts to aid Almira Fales, they also supported the Union hospital at Newbern, North Carolina; the N. E. Women's Auxiliary Association; the Christian Commission; Massachusetts Military State Agency; the Army Committee of the Boston Young Men's Christian Association and the National Sailor's Fair.

This exhibit includes a sampling of some of the letters sent to the South Danvers Soldiers' Aid Society from Almira Fales and others the town supported during the Civil War. Images of the letters and their transcriptions are below.

<u>June 1, 1861 letter from C. S. Devereux</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>September 24, 1862 letter from Almira Fales</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>January 9, 1863 letter from S. Williams</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>February 7, 1863 letter from Almira Fales</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>July 22, 1863 letter from Almira Fales</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>July 9, 1864 letter from Gideon Bantz</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>August 3, 1864 letter from Abby May</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>August 13, 1864 letter from S. Williams</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>August 16, 1864 letter from Almira Fales</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>April 17, 1865 letter from S. G. Cary</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>April 25, 1865 letter from Edward F. Osborn</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>June 5, 1865 letter from Almira Fales</u>	<u>Transcription</u>
<u>June 29, 1865 letter from Almira Fales</u>	<u>Transcription</u>

