

O. M. Poe Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

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Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

2008

Contact information: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/mss/address.html>

**Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress
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Collection Summary

Title: O. M. Poe Papers

Span Dates: 1852-1922

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1863-1885)

ID No.: MSS36459

Creator: Poe, O. M. (Orlando Metcalfe), 1832-1895

Extent: 8,500 items; 19 containers plus 4 oversize and 1 vault container; 7.6 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: United States army officer and civil engineer. Diaries, correspondence, maps, blueprints, newspaper clippings, biographical material, subject files, printed matter, and miscellaneous material relating to his military service during the Civil War, his personal and professional relationship with General William T. Sherman, and his career as a civil engineer in the Great Lakes region.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Personal Names

Bache, Hartman, 1797-1872--Correspondence.
Chandler, Zachariah, 1813-1879--Correspondence.
Howard, Jacob Merritt, 1805-1871--Correspondence.
Poe, O. M. (Orlando Metcalfe), 1832-1895.
Raynolds, W. F. (William Franklin), 1820-1894--Correspondence.
Sherman, William T. (William Tecumseh), 1820-1891--Correspondence.
Sherman, William T. (William Tecumseh), 1820-1891.
Turnbull, Charles N., 1832-1874--Correspondence.
Williamson, R. S. (Robert Stockton), 1824-1882--Correspondence.

Organizations

United States. Army of the Ohio.
United States. Army--Officers.

Subjects

Canals--Great Lakes (North America)
Canals--Illinois.
Canals--Michigan.
Lighthouses--Great Lakes (North America)
Military engineering.
Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)

Locations

Georgia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Hennepin Canal (Ill.)
Huron, Lake (Mich. and Ont.)
Sault Sainte Marie Canal (Mich.)
South Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Spectacle Reef (Mich.)
Tennessee--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Campaigns.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Engineering and construction.

Occupations

Army officers.

Engineers.

Administrative Information

Provenance:

The papers of O. M. Poe, United States army officer and civil engineer, were given to the Library of Congress by his wife, Eleanor Carroll Poe, between 1910 and 1915. Additional material was given to the Library by Mrs. Henry Fitzhugh between 1928 and 1982 and by Mary F. Bell between 1982 and 1995.

Processing History:

The papers of O. M. Poe were arranged and described in 1984 and 1994. The finding aid was revised in 2008.

Transfers:

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Some maps have been transferred to the Geography and Map Division. Some photographs, drawings, and a steel engraving plate have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. Some printed materials have been transferred to the Serial and Government Publications Division and to the general collections of the Library. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the O. M. Poe papers.

Copyright Status:

Copyright in the unpublished writings of O. M. Poe in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of O. M. Poe are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site, and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, O. M. Poe Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1832, Mar. 7	Born, Navarre, Ohio
1856	Graduated, United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.
1856-1861	Served as lieutenant of topographical engineers
1861	Married Eleanor Carroll Brent Appointed colonel of Second Regiment, Michigan Volunteer Infantry
1862	Commissioned brigadier-general of volunteers Commanded troops during the Peninsular campaign in Virginia, the second battle of Bull Run, Va., the Maryland campaign, and the battle of Fredericksburg, Va.

1863	Volunteer commission expired Promoted captain of engineers in regular army Appointed chief engineer of the Army of the Ohio Directed the defenses of Knoxville, Tenn.
1864	Appointed brevet major Brevetted lieutenant colonel for service during Atlanta, Ga. campaign Brevetted colonel for service in Savannah, Ga. campaign
1864-1865	Chief engineer under General William T. Sherman
1865	Brevetted brigadier general for service in campaign resulting in the surrender of General Joseph E. Johnston
1865-1870	Secretary, United States Light-House Board
1870-1873	Engineer, Upper Lakes Light-House District
1873-1884	Commissioned colonel Aide-de-camp to William T. Sherman
1883-1895	Superintended iron and harbor works in Great Lakes region
1895	Died, Detroit, Mich.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Orlando Metcalfe Poe (1832-1895) span the years 1852-1922. The bulk of the collection relates to Poe's Civil War service, his friendship and service as aide-de-camp to General William T. Sherman, and his postwar military and engineering career during 1863-1885. The papers are arranged as [Diaries and Notebooks](#), [Family Correspondence](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Special Correspondence](#), [Letterbooks](#), [Miscellany](#), [Addition](#), [Oversize](#), and [Artifacts](#).

The papers include [three diaries and a combination notebook-diary](#) kept by Poe during the Civil War that document progressively more responsible chief engineer service with several commands beginning with the Army of Ohio and eventually encompassing the Western theater under Sherman during campaigns in Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The [letterbooks](#) provide Poe's daily record of the Civil War period, his postwar engineering career, and his service from 1873 to 1884 as aide-de-camp to Sherman.

[The Family Correspondence](#) includes correspondence of family members Henry Fitzhugh and Rebecca Wise and correspondence relating to the death of Winnifred Poe.

[General Correspondence](#) includes letters exchanged with Hartman Bache, Zachariah Chandler, Jacob M. Howard, William F. Raynolds, Charles N. Turnbull, and Robert S. Williamson.

The [Special Correspondence](#) consists of letters between Poe and his family and William T. Sherman and his family, including approximately one hundred postwar letters from Sherman to Poe. Included are photocopies of annotations made by Sherman on letters found in the General Correspondence.

The [Miscellany](#) includes maps, drawings, reports, and clippings relating to engineering projects Poe supervised after the Civil War, including the Spectacle Reef lighthouse on Lake Huron, the Illinois and Mississippi Canal in Illinois, and the Soo canals at Saulte Ste. Marie, Michigan. Biographical data on Poe can be found in the clippings as well as the biographical material file.

The [Addition](#) relates to the deaths of Poe and his son Charles in 1895.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in eight series:

- [Diaries and Notebooks, circa 1859-1879](#)
- [Family Correspondence, 1852-1897](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1861-1896](#)
- [Special Correspondence, 1864-1891](#)
- [Letterbooks, 1863-1885](#)
- [Miscellany, 1852-1922](#)
- [Addition, 1895](#)
- [Oversize, 1875-1896](#)
- [Artifacts, undated](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<u>Diaries and Notebooks, circa 1859-1879</u> Commonplace book, wartime diaries, and record notebooks. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1-4	<u>Family Correspondence, 1852-1897</u> Incoming and outgoing letters of Poe family members. Arranged alphabetically by correspondent and chronologically thereunder.
BOX 4-11	<u>General Correspondence, 1861-1896</u> Incoming and outgoing letters. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 11	<u>Special Correspondence, 1864-1891</u> Primarily incoming letters of William T. Sherman and Sherman family members. Arranged alphabetically by correspondent and chronologically thereunder.
BOX 12-14	<u>Letterbooks, 1863-1885</u> Letterpress volumes containing copies of incoming and outgoing letters. Includes an index for 1865-1867. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 15-17	<u>Miscellany, 1852-1922</u> Speeches and essays, letters of recommendation, military reports and documents, maps and blueprints, scrapbooks, biographical material, newspaper clippings, checks and receipts, correspondence, and other papers. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 18-19	<u>Addition, 1895</u> Correspondence, clippings, calling cards, and miscellaneous material related to the deaths of Poe and his son. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX OV 1-OV 4	<u>Oversize, 1875-1891</u> Maps, plans, newspapers, and newspaper clippings. Organized and described according to the series from which they were removed.
BOX VA 1	<u>Artifacts, undated</u> Military insignia. Organized and arranged according to the series from which it was removed.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Diaries and Notebooks, circa 1859-1879 Commonplace book, wartime diaries, and record notebooks. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	Diaries, 1863-1877 (3 folders)
BOX 1	Notebooks, circa 1859-1879 (4 folders)
BOX 1-4	Family Correspondence, 1852-1897 Incoming and outgoing letters of Poe family members. Arranged alphabetically by correspondent and chronologically thereunder.
BOX 1	Poe, Betty, 1885-1895
BOX 1	Poe, Charles, 1876-1893
BOX 2	Poe, Eleanor, 1864-1897
BOX 2	Poe, Orlando M., 1852, 1860-1865 (6 folders)
BOX 3	1866-1895 (6 folders)
BOX 3	Poe, Winnifred, 1874-1891 (3 folders)
BOX 3	Undated (1 folder)
BOX 4	(1 folder)
BOX 4	Death of Winnifred Poe, 1891 (2 folders)
BOX 4	Fitzhugh, Henry, 1890-1891
BOX 4	Wise, Rebecca P., 1881
BOX 4-11	General Correspondence, 1861-1896 Incoming and outgoing letters. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 4	1861-1865 (3 folders)
BOX 5	1866-1867 (5 folders)
BOX 6	1868-1875 (5 folders)
BOX 7	1876-1877

Title: O. M. Poe Papers**Span Dates: 1852-1922****Bulk Dates: (bulk 1863-1885)****General Correspondence, 1861-1896****BOX 7** 1878
Container **Contents**
(4 folders)**BOX 8** (2 folders)

1879-1880

(2 folders)

BOX 8 1881

(1 folder)

BOX 9 (1 folder)**BOX 9** 1882

(3 folders)

BOX 10 1883-1896

(4 folders)

BOX 11 Undated**BOX 11** **Special Correspondence, 1864-1891**

Primarily incoming letters of William T. Sherman and Sherman family members.

Arranged alphabetically by correspondent and chronologically thereunder.

BOX 11 Sherman, Ellen Ewing, 1874-1887**BOX 11** Sherman, Ellie, Lizzie, Rachel, and Thomas, 1877-1891**BOX 11** Sherman, William T., 1864-1890

(4 folders)

BOX 12-14 **Letterbooks, 1863-1885**

Letterpress volumes containing copies of incoming and outgoing letters. Includes an index for 1865-1867.

Arranged chronologically.

BOX 12 Index, 1865-1867**BOX 12** 1863, Nov.-1864, Aug.**BOX 12** 1863, Dec.-1864, July**BOX 12** 1864, Aug.-Nov.**BOX 12** 1864, Dec.-1865, Oct.**BOX 12** 1865, Oct.-1866, Feb.**BOX 13** 1866, Feb.-1868, Mar.**BOX 13** 1868, May-1871, Aug.**BOX 13** 1871, Aug-1874, Apr.**BOX 14** 1874, July-1881, Aug.**BOX 14** 1881, July-1885, Apr.**BOX 15-17** **Miscellany, 1852-1922**

Speeches and essays, letters of recommendation, military reports and documents, maps and blueprints, scrapbooks, biographical material, newspaper clippings, checks and receipts, correspondence, and other papers.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material.

BOX 15 Biographical material, 1874-1896**BOX 15** Checks and receipts, 1879-1883

Title: O. M. Poe Papers**Span Dates: 1852-1922****Bulk Dates: (bulk 1863-1885)****Miscellany, 1852-1922**BOX 15 Clippings and newspapers, 1885-1900 [See also Oversize](#)**Container Contents**

BOX 15 General, 1861-1894

BOX 15 Letters of recommendation and personnel records,

BOX 15 General, 1873-1881 [See also Oversize](#)

BOX 15 Hall, Wilburn B., 1874

BOX 16 Maps, plans, and engineering reports

BOX 16 General, 1883-1881

BOX 16 Illinois and Mississippi Canal (Ill.), 1891 [See also Oversize](#)BOX 16 Spectacle Reef lighthouse, Lake Huron, Mich., 1875-1877 [See also Oversize](#)

BOX 16 Memorabilia

BOX 16 General, 1854-1898

BOX 16 Poe, Charles C., commonplace book, undated

BOX 16 Shoulder-rank insignia, colonel undated [See Artifacts](#)

BOX 16 Scrapbooks

BOX 16 1858-1865

(2 folders)

BOX 17 1880-1885

BOX 17 Military reports and documents, 1858-1884

BOX 17 Speeches and essays, 1883-1888

(3 folders)

BOX 17 Twentieth-century descendants, 1918-1922

BOX 18-19 Addition, 1895

Correspondence, clippings, calling cards, and miscellaneous material related to the deaths of Poe and his son.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material.

BOX 18 Calling cards and photographs, 1895

BOX 18 Miscellany, circa 1895

BOX 18 Poe, Charles C., death of

BOX 18 Clippings, 1895

BOX 18 Correspondence, 1895

(5 folders)

BOX 19 Telegrams, 1895

BOX 19 Poe, Orlando M., death of

BOX 19 Clippings, 1895

BOX 19 Correspondence, 1895

(5 folders)

BOX 19 Telegrams, 1895

BOX OV 1-OV 4 Oversize, 1875-1891

Maps, plans, newspapers, and newspaper clippings.

Organized and described according to the series from which they were removed.

BOX OV 1 Miscellany

Clippings and newspapers, 1890-1896 (Container 15)

BOX OV 2 Letters of recommendation and personnel records

Title: O. M. Poe Papers

Span Dates: 1852-1922

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1863-1885)

Oversize, 1875-1891

BOX OV 2

General

Container

Contents

~~BOX OV 2 Map of route, Khartoum to Obeiyad, Sudan, 1875 (Container 15)~~

BOX OV 3

Maps and engineering reports

BOX OV 3

Illinois and Mississippi Canal (Ill.), map, 1891 (Container 16)

BOX OV 4

Spectacle Reef lighthouse, plans, Lake Huron, Mich. 1875-1877 (Container 16)

BOX VA 1

Artifacts, undated

Military insignia.

Organized and arranged according to the series from which it was removed.

BOX VA 1

Shoulder-rank insignia, colonel, undated (Container 16)