

Walter Quintin Gresham Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2010

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79024117>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms010314>

Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Finding aid encoded by Glenn R. Gardner, 2011

Collection Summary

Title: Walter Quintin Gresham Papers

Span Dates: 1857-1932

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1883-1895)

ID No.: MSS24117

Creator: Gresham, Walter Quintin, 1832-1895

Extent: 12,000 items

Extent: 48 containers plus 1 oversize

Extent: 10 linear feet

Extent: 2 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79024117>

Summary: United States secretary of state, secretary of the treasury, postmaster general, jurist, statesman, and soldier. Correspondence, letterbooks, and printed matter relating mainly to Gresham's service as postmaster general in the administration of Chester Alan Arthur and judge and secretary of state in the administration of Grover Cleveland. Also includes letters Gresham wrote to his wife during the Civil War.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Arthur, Chester Alan, 1829-1886.

Bayard, Thomas F. (Thomas Francis), 1828-1898--Correspondence.

Brainerd, Erastus, 1855-1922--Correspondence.

Brewster, Benjamin Harris, 1816-1888--Correspondence.

Bristow, Benjamin Helm, 1832-1896--Correspondence.

Bundy, Martin L., 1817 or 1818-1910--Correspondence.

Butler, Noble Chase, 1844-1933--Correspondence.

Cleveland, Grover, 1837-1908--Correspondence.

Cleveland, Grover, 1837-1908.

Davis, David, 1815-1886--Correspondence.

Denby, Charles, 1830-1904--Correspondence.

Drummond, Thomas, 1809-1890--Correspondence.

Dyer, Charles E., 1834- --Correspondence.

Elliott, Henry Wood, 1846-1930--Correspondence.

Foster, John Watson, 1836-1917--Correspondence.

Foster, Robert Sanford, 1834-1903--Correspondence.

Gresham, Matilda, 1839- --Correspondence.

Gresham, Otto, 1859-1946--Correspondence.

Gresham, Walter Quintin, 1832-1895.

Harlan, John Marshall, 1833-1911--Correspondence.

Kelly, R. M. (Robert Morrow), 1836- --Correspondence.

Martindale, Elijah Bishop, 1828-1910--Correspondence.

Medill, Joseph, 1823-1899--Correspondence.

Morgan, John Tyler, 1824-1907--Correspondence.

Overmyer, John, 1844-1919--Correspondence.

Pauncefote, Julian, 1828-1902--Correspondence.

Scovil, James M.--Correspondence.

Slaughter, Thomas C., -1879--Correspondence.

Voyles, David W.--Correspondence.

Watterson, Henry, 1840-1921--Correspondence.
Willis, Albert S. (Albert Shelby), 1843-1897--Correspondence.
Woodard, J. H. (James H.)--Correspondence.

Organizations

United States. Army.
United States. Department of State.
United States. Post Office Department.

Subjects

Law--United States.
Lotteries--Louisiana.
Presidents--United States--Election--1884.
Presidents--United States--Election--1888.
Sealing--Bering Sea.

Places

Corinth (Miss.)--History.
Georgia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Hawaii--Annexation to the United States.
Hawaii--Politics and government--1893-1900.
Indiana--Politics and government.
Kennesaw Mountain (Ga.)--History.
Kentucky--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Memphis (Tenn.)--History.
Mississippi--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Paducah (Ky.)--History.
Shiloh (Tenn.)--History.
Tennessee--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
United States--Politics and government--19th century.
Vicksburg (Miss.)--History.

Occupations

Cabinet officers.
Judges.
Lawyers.
Soldiers.
Statesmen.

Provenance

The papers of Walter Quintin Gresham, United States secretary of state, secretary of the treasury, postmaster general, jurist, statesman, and soldier were given to the Library of Congress by his son, Otto Gresham, in 1930-1931.

Processing History

The Walter Quintin Gresham Papers were processed before 1960. The collection and finding aid were revised in 2001 and in 2010.

Copyright Status

The papers of Walter Quintin Gresham 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.

Access and Restrictions

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Microfilm

A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on two reels. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition as available.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Walter Quintin Gresham Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1832, Mar. 17	Born near Lanesville, Ind.
1834	Elected sheriff, Harrison County, Ind.
1854	Admitted to bar in Indiana
1858	Married Matilda McGrain
1860	Elected to Indiana house of representatives
1861	Commissioned lieutenant colonel and then colonel, 38th Indiana Volunteer Infantry
1863	Appointed brigadier general, 38th Indiana Volunteer Infantry
1864	Commanded division in General William T. Sherman's Atlanta campaign and was wounded
1869-1883	Judge, United States district judge for Indiana
1883-1884	Postmaster general
1884	Secretary of the treasury
1891-1893	Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
1893-1895	Secretary of state
1895, May 28	Died, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Walter Quintin Gresham (1832-1895) span the years 1857-1932 and include correspondence, telegrams, letterbooks, newspaper clippings, printed matter, and miscellaneous material. The bulk of the collection consists of correspondence, the major portion of which is dated after Gresham's appointment as postmaster general in 1883. The papers prior to that date consist for the most part of Gresham's letters to his wife, Matilda Gresham, written during the Civil War from camps near sites such as Paducah, Shiloh, Corinth, Memphis, Vicksburg, and Kenesaw Mountain. The largest portion of a [Correspondence](#) series, plus [letterbooks](#) for the period 1883-1884 and 1895, relate to Gresham's service as

postmaster general in the administration of Chester Alan Arthur and judge and secretary of state in the administration of Grover Cleveland. Some subjects touched upon are Indiana and national politics, appointments to positions as postmaster, Louisiana lottery, judicial matters, the presidential elections of 1884 and 1888, the question of Hawaiian independence, and the problem regarding pelagic sealing in the Bering Sea. The collection is organized in three series: [Correspondence](#), [Letterbooks and Miscellany](#), and [Oversize](#).

Prominent correspondents include Thomas F. Bayard, Erastus Brainerd, Benjamin Harris Brewster, Benjamin Helm Bristow, Martin L. Bundy, Noble Chase Butler, Grover Cleveland, David Davis, Charles Denby, Thomas Drummond, Charles E. Dyer, John Watson Foster, Robert Sanford Foster, John Marshall Harlan, R. M. Kelley, Elijah Bishop Martindale, Joseph Medill, John Tyler Morgan, John Overmyer, Baron Julian Pauncefote, James M. Scovil, Thomas C. Slaughter, David W. Voyles, Albert S. Willis, and J. H. Woodard.

Also in the collection is correspondence of Gresham's son, Otto Gresham, which includes information on his father's service during the Civil War and his opinions on prominent topics and people in the Ulysses S. Grant and Cleveland administrations.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in three series:

- [Correspondence, 1857-1896](#)
- [Letterbooks and Miscellany, 1857-1932](#)
- [Oversize, 1857-1914](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-44	<p><u>Correspondence, 1857-1896</u></p> <p>Bound volumes of letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically. <i>Containers 39-43 filmed in part and available on microfilm, shelf no. 16,659.</i></p>
BOX 45-48	<p><u>Letterbooks and Miscellany, 1857-1932</u></p> <p>Bound volumes of letters sent. Interspersed between volumes 3 and 4 of the letterbooks is miscellaneous printed matter, an indices to original volumes of the collection, unbound letters of Gresham's son, Otto Gresham, and other material. <i>Letterbook Vol. 4 in Container 48 dated 1893-1895 is available on microfilm, shelf no. 16,659.</i></p>
BOX OV 1	<p><u>Oversize, 1857-1914</u></p> <p>Newspapers. Arranged and described according to the series, container, and folder from which they were removed.</p>

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-44	Correspondence, 1857-1896 Bound volumes of letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically. <i>Containers 39-43 filmed in part and available on microfilm, shelf no. 16,659.</i>
BOX 1	1 Oct. 1857-18 Feb. 1863
BOX 2	28 Feb. 1863-12 July 1864
BOX 3	15 July 1864-26 July 1877
BOX 4	27 July 1877-9 Apr. 1883
BOX 5	10-16 Apr. 1883
BOX 6	17-28 Apr. 1883
BOX 7	29 Apr.-11 May 1883
BOX 8	12-29 May 1883
BOX 9	30 May-12 June 1883
BOX 10	13-27 June 1883
BOX 11	28 June-12 July 1883
BOX 12	13 July-7 Aug. 1883
BOX 13	8 Aug.-4 Sept. 1883
BOX 14	5 Sept.-4 Oct. 1883
BOX 15	5-30 Oct. 1883
BOX 16	31 Oct.-3 Dec. 1883
BOX 17	4-20 Dec. 1883
BOX 18	21 Dec. 1883-8 Jan. 1884
BOX 19	9-28 Jan. 1884
BOX 20	29 Jan. -14 Feb. 1884
BOX 21	15 Feb.-2 Mar. 1884
BOX 22	3-20 Mar. 1884
BOX 23	21 Mar.-5 Apr. 1884
BOX 24	7-22 Apr. 1884
BOX 25	23 Apr.-5 May 1884
BOX 26	6-22 May 1884
BOX 27	23 May-2 June 1884
BOX 28	3-16 June 1884
BOX 29	17 June-3 July 1884
BOX 30	7 July-4 Oct. 1884
BOX 31	5-24 Oct. 1884
BOX 32	25 Oct. 1884-12 July 1885
BOX 33	14 July 1885-23 Mar. 1886
BOX 34	30 Mar. 1886-11 Apr. 1887
BOX 35	12 Apr. 1887-15 Feb. 1888
BOX 36	21 Feb.-26 June 1888
BOX 37	27 June 1888-11 Oct. 1889

Correspondence, 1857-1896

Container	Contents
BOX 38	15 Oct. 1889-16 Apr. 1892
BOX 39 REEL 1	22 Apr. 1892-10 Mar. 1893 Filmed in part, beginning in 1893, microfilm shelf no. 16,659
BOX 40 REEL 1	14 Mar.-22 Aug. 1893
BOX 41 REEL 1	23 Aug. 1893-9 Jan. 1894
BOX 42 REEL 2	2 12 Jan.-27 June 1894
BOX 43 REEL 2	29 June 1894-1896, undated
BOX 44 not filmed	Undated
BOX 45-48	Letterbooks and Miscellany, 1857-1932 Bound volumes of letters sent. Interspersed between volumes 3 and 4 of the letterbooks is miscellaneous printed matter, an indices to original volumes of the collection, unbound letters of Gresham's son, Otto Gresham, and other material. <i>Letterbook Vol. 4 in Container 48 dated 1893-1895 is available on microfilm, shelf no. 16,659.</i>
BOX 45	Letterbooks
BOX 45 not filmed	Vol. 1, 14 Sept. 1883-28 Jan. 1884
BOX 45 not filmed	Vol. 2, 20 Jan.-May 1884
BOX 46 not filmed	Vol. 3, 26 May-25 Sept. 1884
BOX 46 REEL 2	Vol. 4, 9 Mar. 1893-12 Apr. 1895 <i>See Container 48, same heading</i>
BOX 46 not filmed	Clippings and miscellany
BOX 47	Miscellany
BOX 47	Correspondence
BOX 47	Adjutant General's Office, F. Surgett to Gresham, 1865
BOX 47	Transcripts and copies, 1863, 1877, 1889
BOX 47	Court decision, 1889
BOX 47	Gresham, Otto
BOX 47	Correspondence
BOX 47	1897-1900, 1906-1907
BOX 47	1908-1916 (4 folders)
BOX 47	1930
BOX 47	Petition to circuit court, 1929
BOX 47	Petition to Congress, 1932
BOX 47	Indices to original bound volumes of letterbooks, 1883 (2 folders)
BOX 47	Newspapers and newspaper clippings, 1857, circa 1889-1914, undated <i>See also Oversize</i> (2 folders)
BOX 47	Presidential proclamation on Gresham's death, 1895
BOX 47	Printed matter, 1883-1913
BOX 47	Special passport, Hugh Reed, 1894
BOX 48 REEL 2	Letterbooks
BOX 48 REEL 2	Vol. 4, Mar. 1893-12 Apr. 1895 (Container 46)
BOX OV 1	Oversize, 1857-1914 Newspapers.

Oversize, 1857-1914

Container

Contents

Arranged and described according to the series, container, and folder from which they were removed.

BOX OV 1 not filmed

Letterbooks and Miscellany

BOX OV 1

Newspaper clippings, 1857, 1913-1914 (Container 47)