

Albert James Myer Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2023

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm77034041>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms012011>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2012
Revised 2023 June

Collection Summary

Title: Albert James Myer Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1851-1933

Bulk Dates: 1851-1880

ID No.: MSS34041

Creator: Myer, Albert James, 1829-1880

Extent: 300 items

Extent: 2 containers

Extent: .8 linear feet

Extent: 1 microfilm reel

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm77034041>

Summary: Army officer and surgeon. Correspondence, biographical material, and printed matter relating in part to Myer's service as a surgeon in the army and his role in the founding and development of the Signal Corps, including 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

Myer, Albert James, 1829-1880.

Myer, Catherine Walden, approximately 1834--Correspondence.

Walden, James, active 1868--Correspondence.

Organizations

United States. Army--Surgeons.

United States. Army. Signal Corps.

Subjects

Fortification--Texas.

Indians of North America--Texas.

Indians of North America--Wars--1815-1875.

Places

Fort Davis (Tex.)

Fort Duncan (Tex.)

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Occupations

Army officers.

Surgeons.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Albert James Myer, army officer and surgeon, were given to the Library of Congress by John Rogers Meigs Taylor in 1935.

Processing History

The papers of Albert James Myer were arranged and described by Debra Hickman and Michael McElderry in 1975. The finding aid was revised in 2011. The finding aid was updated in 2023 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

Transfers

Photographs have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division where they are identified as part of the Albert James Myer Papers; selected photographs are available at <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004668986>. Patrons are encouraged to contact the Prints and Photographs Division in advance of a research visit.

Other Repositories

Other Myer papers are located in the U.S. Army Signal Corps Museum, Fort Monmouth, N.J.

Related Material

Related collections in the Manuscript Division include a [microfilm of Myer Papers](#) obtained from originals at the U.S. Army Signal Corps Museum, Fort Monmouth, N.J.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Albert James Myer is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Albert James Myer 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.

Microfilm

A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on one reel. Consult a reference librarian 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.

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1828, Sept. 20	Born, Newburgh, N.Y.
circa 1841	Entered Geneva College (now Hobart College), Geneva, N.Y.
1851	M.D., Buffalo Medical College, Buffalo, N.Y. 1854 Entered military service

1857	Married Catherine Walden
1858-1861	Appointed by the army to a board to examine signaling principles Conducted field trial of signaling inventions in the Department of New Mexico
1860	Ordered to organize and command U.S. Army Signal Corps
1860-1863	Served under Benjamin Butler at Fort Monroe, Va., and then as chief signal officer under George Brinton McClellan in the Army of the Potomac
1863	Promoted to colonel in new U.S. Signal Corps, but removed him from his post as chief signal officer by Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton
1864	Publication of <i>Manual of Signals</i> Appointed signal officer, Military Division of West Mississippi
1864-1865	Signal officer, Department of the Gulf Developed coding system for transmitting routine messages between land and sea forces
1867-1880	Chief signal officer, Signal Corps
1873	Proposed establishment world-wide of weather-reporting stations, International Meteorological Congress, Vienna, Austria
1880, Aug. 24	Died, Buffalo, N.Y

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Albert James Myer (1829-1880) span the years 1851-1933, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1851-1880. The collection contains correspondence, biographical material, and printed matter relating to Myer's service as a surgeon in the army from 1854 to 1860, especially his assignments at Fort Davis and Fort Duncan in Texas, where he observed warfare with Native American groups, and to his role in the founding and development of the Signal Corps, 1856-1880. Also treated is the contribution of the Signal Corps to Union military efforts in the Civil War. Correspondents include Myer's wife, Catherine Walden Myer, and James Walden.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged by type of material.

Container List

Microfilm. Shelf no. 16,561 (negative no. 12,193)

Container	Contents
BOX 1 REEL 1	Correspondence, 1851-1891, undated (5 folders)
BOX 1 REEL 1	Biographical material
BOX 1 REEL 1	Fort Myer, Va., memorial
BOX 1 REEL 1	Miscellaneous
BOX 1 not filmed	Printed matter
BOX 1	Magazine and newspaper articles (1 folder)
BOX 2	(4 folders)
BOX 2	Orders, War Department
BOX 2	Reports
BOX 2	Signal Corps