

Albert James Myer Papers
A Finding Aid to the Microfilm 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/mm77065497>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms012012>

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: 1816-1880

ID No.: MSS65497

Creator: Myer, Albert James, 1829-1880

Extent: 4 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm77065497>

Summary: Army officer and surgeon. Microfilm focusing on Myer's service in the Signal Corps and documentation of his work in meteorology, including correspondence, biographical material, letterbooks, diaries, reports, memoranda, legal and business papers, and printed matter. Also contains papers of his father-in-law, Ebenezer Walden, and material relating to a patent by his father, Henry Beekman Myer, for the railway sleeping car.

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, Albert James, 1829-1880. A manual of signals: for the use of signal officers in the field. 1864.

Myer, Henry Beekman, 1795-1882.

Walden, Ebenezer, 1777-1857. Ebenezer Walden papers. 1816-1844.

Organizations

United States North Polar Expedition (1871-1873)

United States. Army--Communication systems.

United States. Army. Signal Corps.

United States. Weather Bureau.

Subjects

Comanche Indians.

Indians of North America--New Mexico--Wars.

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

Meteorology.

Patents--United States.

Railroad cars--Patents.

Places

Arctic regions--Discovery and exploration.

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

Occupations

Army officers.

Surgeons.

Acquisition Information

The microfilm of papers of Albert James Myer, army officer and surgeon, was obtained on microfilm through exchange from the U.S. Army Signal Corps Museum, Fort Monmouth, N.J., in 1960.

Processing History

The microfilm of papers of Albert James Myer were arranged and described in 1977 by Michael McElderry. 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.

Other Repositories

Originals of the microfilm of the 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 separate collection of papers of [Albert James Myer](#) .

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

The microfilm of these papers is available on four reels. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: 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 microfilm of papers of Albert James Myer (1829-1880) spans the years 1816-1880, with the focus on Myer's service in the Signal Corps and documentation of his work in meteorology. The collection consists of correspondence, biographical material, letterbooks, diaries, reports, memoranda, legal and business papers, and printed material, including papers of his father-in-law, Ebenezer Walden, and material relating to a patent by his father, Henry Beekman Myer, for the railway sleeping car. The papers are organized as filmed from the originals at the U.S. Army Signal Corps Museum, Fort Monmouth, N.J.

Subjects include Myer's role in the founding and development of the Signal Corps, including his removal and reappointment as chief signal officer; military campaigns against the Comanche people in New Mexico, 1860-1861; publication of Myer's *Manual of Signals* (1864); the establishment of the Weather Bureau; and the North Polar Expedition, 1871-1873.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged as filmed from the originals at the U.S. Army Signal Corps Museum, Fort Monmouth, N.J.

Container List

Microfilm shelf no. 12,190 (originals at the United States Army Signal Corps Museum)

Container	Contents
REEL 1	Papers of Ebenezer Walden (father-in-law) 1816-1844, undated
REEL 1	Degrees, commissions, and honors, 1855-1880
REEL 1	Diaries, 1850-1857
REEL 1	Reports and correspondence concerning the submission, examination, and adoption of Myer's system of signals, 1856-1860
REEL 1	Correspondence
REEL 1	1859, Jan.-1864, Apr. 2
REEL 2	1864, Apr.-1878, Dec. 3
REEL 3	1879, Jan.-1880, June
REEL 3	Meteorology, 1870-1880, undated
REEL 3	Papers of Albert James Myer, St. Paul's School collection
REEL 3	Letters from wife, Catherine Walden Myer, 1862-1865
REEL 3	Rank, back pay, and promotion, including correspondence, military orders, reports, and other papers concerning the development of the Signal Corps
REEL 3	Letters to and from Simeon White, 1865-1867
REEL 3	Patents, 1859-1868
REEL 3	Patent of Henry Beekman Myer (father)
REEL 3	Memento and programs, includes correspondence, 1860-1880
REEL 4	Correspondence
REEL 4	Letters from James A. Hardie, 1862, Jan.-1863, Sept.
REEL 4	Letters from Joseph Warren, 1868, Mar.-June
REEL 4	Societies, 1868-1876
REEL 4	Letters of William Winthrop and legal opinions of C. S. Black and George H. Williams regarding the supply of Myer's book, <i>Manual of Signals</i> , to the military services, 1876, Apr.
REEL 4	Kappa Alpha Society, 1879, Aug.-1880, Mar.
REEL 4	Undated
REEL 4	Biographical material
REEL 4	Personal interests, newspaper clippings
REEL 4	Obituary notices of Myer
REEL 4	Letterbooks
REEL 4	1857, Apr.-1860, June
REEL 4	1862, Dec.-1863, Sept.
REEL 4	1868, Jan.-1870, July
REEL 4	1870, Aug.-1875, Jan.
REEL 4	Newspaper clippings