

A Guide to the George M. Neese Papers, 1859-1946 SC 0355

George M. Neese papers
1859-1946



Title Statement

A Guide to the George M. Neese Papers, 1859-1946 SC 0355

Author: Tiffany Cole

Publication Statement

Publisher: James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

820 Madison Drive
MSC 1706
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22807
Telephone: (540) 568-3612
library-special@jmu.edu
URL: <https://www.lib.jmu.edu/special/>



September 2023

Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2025-10-08 07:07:39 -0400.

Language Usage: Description is written in: English, Latin script.

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 0355

Unit ID

/repositories/4/resources/727

Unit Date

1859-1946

Language

English

Abstract

The collection comprises the personal papers, correspondence, diaries, and writings of George M. Neese of New Market, Virginia.

source

Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates

Creator

Neese, George M. (George Michael), 1839-1921

Extent

0.83 cubic feet 3 boxes

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection. Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the James Madison University Special Collections Library to use this collection.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to the James Madison University Special Collections Library. For more information, contact the Special Collections Library Reference Desk (library-special@jmu.edu).

Acquisition Information

Acquired at Jeffrey S. Evans's Summer Americana & Variety Auction on August 24, 2019.

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], George M. Neese Papers, SC 0355, 1859-1946, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Biographical / Historical

George M. Neese (1839-1921), son of Michael and Elizabeth Zirkle Neese, was born in Shenandoah County, Virginia. As a youth, he attended New Market Academy. During the Civil War, Neese served for three years in the Confederate Army as a gunner in Chew's Battery, Stuart's Horse Artillery in the Army of Northern Virginia. He was captured approximately six miles north of Woodstock, Virginia on October 9, 1864. Neese was held as a prisoner at Point Lookout, Maryland for the remainder of the Civil War. After the war ended and he was released, Neese returned to Shenandoah County where he worked as a fresco painter, house painter, and wallpaper hanger for William F. Rupp. Neese also lived with Rupp's family in the Spitzer-Rupp House on Congress Street until his death in 1921. Neese kept diaries about his experience during the Civil War and published them under the title *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery* (1911).

Scope and Contents

The collection comprises the personal papers, correspondence, diaries, and writings of George M. Neese of New Market, Virginia.

Correspondence is primarily letters, postcards, and direct mail addressed to Neese.

Neese's personal papers comprise, among other materials, a handwritten draft manuscript of *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery*, post-Civil War diaries, field books documenting bird sightings around New Market, and poetry.

Separated Materials

A copy of *The People's Pocket Dictionary of the Holy Bible* with George Neese's owner's signature was separated from the collection and cataloged individually.

Related Materials

George M. Neese. Papers, 1859-1921. Accession 13994. Personal papers collection. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. 23219.

Rupp Family Papers, 1831-1973, SC 0342, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University,

Harrisonburg, VA.

New Market Poll Book, 1870 May 26, SC 0356, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Keywords

Diaries

Letters (correspondence)

Postcards

Manuscripts (documents)

Drafts (documents)

Research notes

Autograph albums

Direct mail

Birds -- Virginia -- New Market

Bird watching -- Virginia -- New Market

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Personal narratives, Confederate

Virginia -- History -- 19th century

New Market (Va.) -- History

Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates

Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Artillery

Appraisal

A copy of *Sketches accompanying the Annual report of the Superintendent of the United States Coast Survey* (1851) was not retained due to its poor condition. All loose items were removed and incorporated into the collection. Pages with substantive annotations were photocopied and retained.

Provenance

From the Fritz and Loretta Orebaugh estate, New Market, Virginia.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in two series:

- Correspondence, 1868-1946
- Personal papers, 1859-1921

Description of Subordinate Components

Correspondence

Unit ID 1

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28957

Unit Date 1868-1946

Scope and Contents

Series 1: Correspondence, 1869-1946, comprises correspondence, postcards, and direct mail sent to George M. Neese and includes letters from business owners, private individuals, family members, and government officials.

Correspondence related to the publication of Neese's Civil War diaries under the title *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery* includes letters from John W. Daniel, U.S. Senator from Lynchburg, Virginia, who was assisting Neese with publication. A 1946 letter to Fritz Orebaugh (through whose family the papers descended) requests to compare the original Civil War diaries against the published book to distinguish contemporary notes from additions made after the war. A 1920 letter from Henry Read McIlwaine, Virginia State Librarian, to George Neese concerns Neese's donation of materials including his original Civil War diaries to the Virginia State Library (now Library of Virginia). Correspondence with Neale Publishing as well as a carbon copy of Neese's 1908 publishing contract with them is included.

Correspondence from Neese's family in Memphis, Missouri, specifically the family of Neese's brother Aaron and nephew Jacob, discusses family matters, deaths, and provides general updates.

Correspondence from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Biological Survey acknowledges Neese's submitted notes on the spring migration of birds at New Market.

Correspondence from Theodore Schuster from Brooklyn, New York concerns acquisition of plants, flowers, bulbs, and seeds.

General correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28978

Unit Date 1868-1914

Mixed Materials [1000897411] 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

General correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28985

Unit Date 1870-1920

Mixed Materials [1000897411] 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

General correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28963

Unit Date 1873-1906

Mixed Materials [1000897411] 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

General correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28977

Unit Date 1873-1911

Mixed Materials [1000897411] 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

General correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28964

Unit Date undated

Mixed Materials [1000897411] 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Postcards

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28965

Unit Date 1873-1905

Mixed Materials [1000897411] 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Postcards

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28956

Unit Date 1875-1904

Mixed Materials [1000897411] 1 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Theodore Schuster correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28960

Unit Date 1874-1878

Mixed Materials [1000897411] 1 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Direct mail

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28984

Unit Date 1875-1885

Mixed Materials [1000897411] 1 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Neese family in Missouri correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28962

Unit Date 1877-1905

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28959

Unit Date 1895-1946

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Biological Survey correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28961

Unit Date 1898-1904

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Personal papers

Unit ID 2

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28958

Unit Date 1859-1921

Scope and Contents

Series 2: Personal Papers, 1859-1921, comprises the writings, diaries, ledgers, photographs, and assorted personal papers of George M. Neese. The series also includes several handwritten poems that are unattributed but may have been written by Neese.

Of note is Neese's draft manuscript of *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery* which was published by Neale Publishing in 1911. The manuscript is largely complete and includes numbered pages 5 through 217 with some unnumbered pages and gaps. The draft covers almost the entirety of the published diary. The draft is written on poor quality scraps of paper including calendar pages and advertisements. The original diaries that served as the basis for Neese's book are held by the Library of Virginia.

Twenty-four diaries and loose diary entries document Neese's daily activities, work conducted as a painter and wallpaper hanger, weather, deaths, and other community news.

Neese kept notebooks documenting bird sightings in New Market. He included the date, species, and number of birds for each sighting.

According to notations on the front page, the address "In New Market Cemetery" was given by Charles Bemis Bliss on the occasion of Memorial Day 1911. It is dated May 28, 1911.

Diary/ledger

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28973

Unit Date 1859-1874

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Loose diary entries, accounts

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28976

Unit Date 1866-1878

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Ledger

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28974

Unit Date 1866-1903

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Diaries

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28970

Unit Date 1881-1899

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Diaries

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28971

Unit Date 1900-1907

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Diaries

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28972

Unit Date 1908-1916

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Loose items removed from Sketches accompanying the Annual report of the Superintendent of the United States Coast Survey (1851)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28968

Unit Date 1862, undated

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

Scope and Contents

Includes scanned pages with annotations.

Promissory note for purchase of organ for St. Matthews Church

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28982

Unit Date circa 1878

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Autograph album

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28975

Unit Date 1879-1881

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 12 (folder)

Bird field books

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28969

Unit Date 1884-1917

Mixed Materials [1000897412] 2 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

Draft manuscript of Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28966

Unit Date circa 1894

Mixed Materials [1000897413] 3 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Printed muster roll for the Confederate States Army

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28987

Unit Date circa 1905

Mixed Materials [1000897413] 3 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

"In New Market Cemetery", Memorial Day address by C[harles] B[emis] Bliss

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28967

Unit Date 1911 May 28

Mixed Materials [1000897413] 3 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Scope and Contents

Address was given fifty years after the beginning of the Civil War. Discussion of the results of the Civil War from the perspective of Massachusetts pastor C.B. Bliss. Invokes Lost Cause narratives.

George M. Neese at St. Matthews Church photographs

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28983

Unit Date circa 1920

Mixed Materials [1000897413] 3 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Poetry

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28979

Unit Date undated

Mixed Materials [1000897413] 3 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Directions for papering hall

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28981

Unit Date undated

Mixed Materials [1000897413] 3 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Ephemera, "Geo M Neese" signature stencil

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/28986

Unit Date undated

Mixed Materials [1000897413] 3 (box)

Container 7 (folder)