

Guide to the Walter Keeler Scofield Papers

MS 437



compiled by Betsy Morris and Janet Elaine Gertz

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Yale University Library
P.O. Box 208240
New Haven, CT 06520-8240
(203) 432-1735
(203) 432-7441

beinecke.library@yale.edu

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	3
Requesting Instructions	3
Administrative Information	3
Immediate Source of Acquisition	3
Conditions Governing Access	4
Conditions Governing Use	4
Preferred Citation	4
Biographical / Historical	4
Scope and Contents	4
Collection Contents	6
Inventory, 1859-1910	6
Selected Search Terms	7

Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 437

CREATOR: Scofield, Walter Keeler, 1839-1910

TITLE: Walter Keeler Scofield papers

DATES: 1859-1910

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 1 linear foot

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Correspondence, diaries, journals, scrapbooks, photographs and miscellanea relating to Walter Keeler Scofield's career as naval surgeon during the Civil War and his later voyages to Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, and the West Indies.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0437>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0437>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Edward C. Scofield, 1953-1962 and transferred from the Historical Medical Library, Yale University, 1983.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

Walter Keeler Scofield Papers. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

Graduated from Columbia in 1861; commissioned into the Navy in 1862, and served during the Civil War as a physician and surgeon; after the war was on the staff of the naval hospital in Norfolk, Va.; was stationed in China, Japan, South America, Africa, and Europe; in 1895 transferred to headquarters in Philadelphia and served there until his retirement.

Scope and Contents

The Walter Keeler Scofield Papers consist of correspondence, military papers, Civil War diaries and medical memorandum books, journals kept during cruises to Europe, Asia, and South America, scrapbooks and photographs, and other miscellaneous papers.

The correspondence is largely that of Scofield to his parents, siblings, and wife and children during his various voyages with the United States Navy. Approximately half of the letters date from the Civil War and discuss Scofield's experience as a naval surgeon with the Union blockade off of Florida, Louisiana, and Texas, describing his quarters both in Navy hospitals and aboard the "Sagamore" and other vessels, his everyday life aboard ship, and the climate and inhabitants of the southern states off of which he was stationed. Both of Scofield's brothers were also in the Navy, and there is some correspondence with John, who was also with the naval hospital, and with George, who was stationed in California for the duration of the war (see folders 12 a-b). Walter Scofield's letters from after the war describe voyages to England, Russia, and Germany in 1866 (his brother John accompanied him on this voyage; his letters are to be found in folder 12 a), to South America via the West Coast of Africa in 1887, and his return to the United States via the Mediterranean in 1888-1889. These letters offer descriptions of the countries visited, of life aboard ship during lengthy voyages, and they express Scofield's homesickness for his family. His letters conclude with a series written from Stamford, Connecticut, to his daughter, who was staying with relatives in Florida in 1893-1894, and describe social and family events.

Complementing Scofield's Civil War letters are his diaries for 1861-1864 and medical memorandum books for 1863-1864. The latter detail patients' symptoms and treatment, and contain as well short diary entries and accounts. The diaries themselves also comment on patients and medical procedures, and the health of the men aboard ship. Interspersed are descriptions of areas visited during the blockade, some accompanied by sketches of scenery and other ships; notes on Scofield's finances and on his continual study of medicine and other sciences; accounts of shipboard life, several courts martial, hunting and fishing along the Florida coast, and military activities such as seizures of blockade runners, skirmishes with Rebel troops ashore, and attacks on Tampa and other sites in Florida.

Scofield's military papers consist of orders, correspondence, and some printed matter dealing with his career as a naval surgeon. Among the documents are a number signed by Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles, one by Acting Secretary Theodore Roosevelt (1897 Sep 30), and a variety of other government officials.

Aside from a few notes on medical lectures, and miscellaneous papers relating to his family, the remainder of Scofield's papers are journals, logs, scrapbooks, and books of drawings and photographs from his cruises. Included are journals of a cruise to the West Indies and then to Europe on a good-will mission to Russia, 1866-1867, and a scrapbook of clippings, letters, and memorabilia pasted into a Russian copy of *Moscow: A Detailed Historical and Archaeological Description of the City*, by I. M. Snegirevii (1865); a log kept aboard the U.S.S. "Lackawanna" during a cruise to China and Japan in 1872-1875 and a sketch book from the same voyage; and a photograph album of famous people and places in Europe.

These papers were donated to Yale University by Edward A. Scofield between 1953-1962. The diaries and medical memorandum books were transferred to Manuscripts and Archives from the Historical Medical Library in 1983.

Collection Contents

Inventory, 1859-1910

Correspondence		
b. 1, f. 1 - 7	W.K.S. to his parents, brother, and sister	1861-1866
b. 1, f. 8 - 11	W.K.S. to his wife and children	1877, 1887-1894
b. 1, f. 12	Other family members to one another	1862-1877, undated
b. 1, f. 13 - 20	Military papers	1861-1910
b. 1, f. 21	Notes [on medical school?]	1859
b. 1, f. 22	Miscellaneous papers	1861, undated
b. 1, f. 23	Journals of cruises	1866-1867
b. 2, f. 24	Miscellaneous notebooks	1866-1868, undated
b. 2, f. 25	Scrapbook of Russian mission and other events	1866-1870
b. 2, f. 26	Log kept on board the U.S.S. Lackawanna on trip to China and Japan	1872-1875
b. 2, f. 27	Sketch book of trip to China and Japan	[1872-1875?]
b. 2, f. 28	Photograph album containing personal and purchased photographs of famous people and places in Europe	undated
b. 2, f. 29	Photographs of W.K.S.	[ca. 1861-1865]
b. 2, f. 30	Obituary and funeral articles	1910
b. 3, f. 31 - 42	Diary	1861 November-1864 April
b. 3, f. 43 - 47	Medical memorandum books	1863 October-1864 May

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.

Subjects

Armed Forces
Medicine
Physicians
Shipping
Travelers -- United States
Voyages and travels

Geographic Names

Asia
Europe -- Description and travel
Great Britain
Soviet Union
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
-- Medical and sanitary affairs
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
-- Naval operations
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
-- Personal narratives

Genres / Formats

Diaries
Photographs
Scrapbooks

Names

Scofield, Walter Keeler, 1839-1910

Corporate Body

Lackawanna (Ship)