

# Almon Ferdinand Rockwell Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the  
Library of Congress

Prepared by Patrick Kerwin and Bradley E.  
Gernand



Manuscript Division, Library of  
Congress

Washington, D.C.

2010

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

Finding aid encoded by Glenn R.  
Gardner, 2011

Finding aid URL: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/eadmss.ms010316>

# Collection Summary

Title: Almon Ferdinand Rockwell Papers

Span Dates: 1852-1900

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1861-1865 and 1877-1884)

ID No.: MSS38091

Creator: Almon Ferdinand Rockwell, b. 1835

Extent: 2,000 items; 9 containers; 3.4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Abstract: Army officer and superintendent of public buildings, Washington, D.C. Correspondence, diaries and journals concerning Rockwell's investments in commercial enterprises with James A. Garfield, Garfield's assassination and his appointment controversy with Roscoe Conkling, and Rockwell's Civil War experiences, including the Battle of Shiloh.

## 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.

### People

Barney, James M.--Correspondence.

Bragg, Braxton, 1817-1876.

Buell, Don Carlos, 1818-1898--Correspondence.

Conkling, Roscoe, 1829-1888.

Flower, Frank Abial, 1854-1911--Correspondence.

Garfield, James A. (James Abram), 1831-1881--Assasination.

Garfield, James A. (James Abram), 1831-1881--Correspondence.

Garfield, James A. (James Abram), 1831-1881--Death and burial.

Garfield, James A. (James Abram), 1831-1881.

Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865--Death and burial.

Manderson, Charles F. (Charles Frederick), 1837-1911--Correspondence.

Nelson, William, 1824-1862.

Rockwell, Almon Ferdinand, b. 1835.

Seward, William Henry, 1801-1872--Correspondence.

Wilson, John M. (John Moulder), 1837-1919--Correspondence.

### Organizations

Silver King Mining Company.

### Subjects

Corinth, Battle of, Corinth, Miss., 1862.

Public buildings--Washington (D.C.)

Shiloh, Battle of, Tenn., 1862.

Silver mines and mining.

### Places

Alabama--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Kentucky--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Mississippi--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Nashville (Tenn.)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

New York (State)--Politics and government--1865-1950.

Tennessee--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

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

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
United States--Politics and government--1877-1881.

Occupations  
Army officers.  
Public officials.

## Administrative Information

### Provenance

The papers of Almon Ferdinand Rockwell, army officer and superintendent of public buildings, Washington, D.C, were given to the Library of Congress by Samuel A. Crozer in 1920.

### Processing History

The collection was reprocessed in 2000, and the finding aid was revised in 2010.

### Additional Guides

The Rockwell Papers are described in *Report of the Librarian of Congress*, 1921, p. 38.

### Transfers

Photographs have been transferred to the Library's Prints and Photographs Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

### Other Repositories

The Historical Society of Washington, D.C., holds papers concerning the bullet in the Library's Rockwell collection that was removed from President James A. Garfield in Rockwell's presence.

### Copyright Status

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

### Access and Restrictions

The papers of Almon Ferdinand Rockwell 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.

### Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Almon Ferdinand Rockwell Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1835, Oct. 17	Born, Gilbertsville, Ostego, N.Y.
circa 1854	Student, Williams College, Williamstown, Mass.
1861-1897	United States Army officer

1862	Married Henrietta S. Hunter, Worcester, Mass.
1881-1885	Superintendent of Public Buildings, Washington, D.C.
1885-1895	Major Quartermaster, United States Army
1895-1897	Deputy Quartermaster, United States Army
1897	Retired from United States Army
1903, Aug.	Died

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Almon Ferdinand Rockwell (1835-1903) span the years 1852-1900, with the bulk of the material dating from 1861 to 1865 and 1877 to 1884. The papers consist primarily of correspondence, diaries, journals and reports.

Rockwell, an army officer, was present at the deathbeds of presidents Abraham Lincoln and James A. Garfield. Rockwell and Garfield were friends and college classmates and corresponded until the latter's death. Their correspondence, which includes ninety letters from Garfield, concerns their friendship, investments in the Silver King Mine in Colorado, and President Garfield's appointment of Rockwell as superintendent of public buildings and grounds. Other correspondents include William Henry Seward, 1854; James M. Barney of the Silver King Mine, 1877-1881; John M. Wilson, concerning ownership of the Albert Bierstadt paintings hanging in the White House, 1893; Charles F. Manderson, concerning efforts in the United States Senate to place General Don Carlos Buell on the retired list, 1894-1895; and Buell, explaining his resignation from the army, 1864 and 1895. Also included in the correspondence is a letter to Frank Abial Flower, 1898, describing the death of President Lincoln.

Rockwell, who kept a diary most of his life, recorded his experiences on General Don Carlos Buell's staff during the Civil War and described the federal occupation of Nashville, Tennessee, the Shiloh and Corinth campaigns, marches and skirmishes in northern Alabama, and the pursuit of General Braxton Bragg in Kentucky. Other entries concern the death of General William Nelson and the removal and reinstatement of General Buell.

Also included in these papers are handwritten reports by Rockwell concerning a conversation with President Garfield two days before his death in which he wondered whether he would achieve a place in history, the assassination attempt upon Garfield's life, and the events surrounding Garfield's death. A lock of the late president's hair and Rockwell's signature, written with the bullet which killed the president after its removal from the corpse, is included.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged by type of material.

# Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Journals
BOX 1	1852, 1861-1862, 1873-1884 (6 folders)
BOX 2	1884-1889 (5 folders)
BOX 3	1892-1900 (3 folders)
BOX 3	Correspondence
BOX 3	Letterbook, 1869-1875
BOX 3	Miscellaneous
BOX 3	1854-1877 (4 folders)
BOX 4	1877-1878 (5 folders)
BOX 5	1879-1881 (5 folders)
BOX 6	1881-1885, 1893-1898, undated (7 folders)
BOX 7	Subject file
BOX 7	Blaine, James Gillespsie, epigram, undated
BOX 7	Civil War
BOX 7	Miscellaneous, 1861-1865
BOX 7	Surrender of the Confederacy, Appomattox, Va., 1865
BOX 7	Garfield, Eliza Ballou, 1888
BOX 7	Garfield, James A.
BOX 7	Article by Rockwell, 1880
BOX 7	Assassination attempt and death, 1881
BOX 7	Alleged machinations by friends
BOX 7	Bullet
BOX 7	Removal from corpse
BOX 7	Signature
BOX 7	Last moments prior to death
BOX 7	Sequence of events of assassination
BOX 7	Conkling, Roscoe, appointment controversy, 1881
BOX 7	Inauguration as president, 1881
BOX 7	Lock of hair from corpse, 1881
BOX 7	Presidential election, (1880), 1880-1884, undated
BOX 7	Speeches
BOX 7	1860, July-1874, Mar. (2 folders)
BOX 8	1874, Apr.-1880, May, undated (3 folders)

## Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 8	Tributes and memorials, 1881-1882, undated (2 folders)
BOX 8	Writings about Garfield, 1880-1882
BOX 8	Gibbs, B. F., estate, 1882-1883
BOX 8	Medical thesis, 1857
BOX 9	Military Orders of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Commandery District of Columbia, 1882-1884
BOX 9	Miscellany, 1866, 1880, undated
BOX 9	United States Army, orders, 1861, 1881-1897
BOX 9	Williams College, Williamstown, Mass., class of 1856
BOX 9	Autographs, undated
BOX 9	Reunion program, 1881
BOX 9	Yearbook, 1856