Fitz-John Porter

A Register of His Papers in the Library of Congress

Prepared by David Mathisen
Revised and expanded by Melinda K. Friend and Chante Wilson

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

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Collection Summary

Title: Papers of Fitz-John Porter
Span Dates: 1830-1949
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1861-1898)
ID No.: MSS36590
Creator: Porter, Fitz-John, 1822-1901
Extent: 13,000 items; 67 containers plus 10 oversize; 26.8 linear feet; 31 microfilm reels
Language: Collection material in English
Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Abstract: Army officer and public official in New York, N.Y., and New Jersey. Correspondence, telegrams, reports, memoranda, writings, autobiographical and biographical material, maps, scrapbooks, printed matter, and miscellany largely concerning Porter's court-martial and cashiering out of military service during the Civil War and his later reinstatement and presidential pardon.

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.

Names:
Porter, Fitz-John, 1822-1901
Bullitt, John C. (John Christian), 1824-1902--Correspondence
Grant, Ulysses S. (Ulysses Simpson), 1822-1885--Correspondence
Hoar, George Frisbie, 1826-1904--Correspondence
Johnson, Reverdy, 1796-1876--Correspondence
Lord, Theodore Akerly, 1844-1914
Mangold, Ferdinand Franz, 1832-1903
McClellan, Carswell, 1835-1892
McClellan, George Brinton, 1826-1885--Correspondence
McDowell, Irvin, 1818-1885
Patterson, Robert, 1792-1881
Pope, John, 1822-1892
Ruggles, George D. (George David), d. 1904--Correspondence
Sewell, William Joyce, 1835-1901--Correspondence
Weld, Stephen Minot, 1842- --Correspondence
United States. Army. Corps, 5th (1862-1865)

Subjects:
Antietam, Battle of, Md., 1862
Bull Run, 2nd Battle of, Va., 1862
Courts-martial and courts of inquiry
Malvern Hill, Battle of, Va., 1862
Mexican War, 1846-1848
Peninsular Campaign, 1862
Shenandoah Valley Campaign, 1861
Manassas (Va.)--History
Maryland--History--Civil War, 1861-1865
Texas--Discovery and exploration
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Campaigns
Utah--Discovery and exploration
Virginia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865

Occupations:
Army officers

Public officials--New Jersey
Public officials--New York (State)--New York

Administrative Information

Provenance:

The papers of Fitz-John Porter, army officer and public official in New York, N.Y., and New Jersey, were deposited in the Library of Congress between 1911 and 1951 by Holbrook Fitz-John Porter and other members of the Porter family. The deposit was converted to a gift in 1952.

Processing History:

The papers of Fitz-John Porter were processed in 1963 and prepared for microfilming in 1988. The finding aid was revised and part of the collection rehoused in 2003 and 2004. A brief description of the Porter Papers appears in *Handbook of Manuscripts in the Library of Congress* (Washington, D.C.: 1918), p. 339.

Copyright Status:

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Fitz-John Porter is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Microfilm:

A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on thirty-one 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: Container or reel number, Fitz-John Porter Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	***Event***
1822, Aug. 31	Born, Portsmouth, N.H.
1841-1845	Cadet, United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.
1846-1849	Promoted to second lieutenant and served with Generals Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott during Mexican War, advancing to ranks of captain and major for gallantry in action
1849-1855	Instructor, United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.
1856	Transferred to Adjutant General's Department
1857	Married Harriet Pierson Cook
1857-1860	Attached to Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston's Utah Expedition as assistant adjutant general and chief of staff until ordered back to the East
1860-1861	Inspected defenses of Charleston, S.C., harbor, supervised withdrawal of troops from Texas, and in charge of restoration and protection of railroads between Washington, D.C., and the North
1861, Feb.	Special duty in the Gulf of Mexico

1861, May 14	Appointed colonel
1861, May 17	Appointed brigadier general, volunteers
1862, July 4	Appointed major general, volunteers
1862	Commanded 5th Army Corps under General George Brinton McClellan
1862-1863	Court-martialed for disobedience of orders and misconduct in the face of the enemy at the 2nd Battle of Manassas and cashiered
1865-1871	Merchant in New York and appointed commissioner of public works, police commissioner and fire commissioner of New York, N.Y., and cashier of the New York Post Office
1879	Vindicated of court-martial charges by military review
1886, Aug. 5	Recommissioned in the army by special act of Congress
1901, May 21	Died, Morristown, N.J.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Fitz-John Porter (1822-1901) span the years from 1830 to 1949, with the bulk of the material dated between 1861 and 1898. The collection includes correspondence; telegrams; reports; memoranda; articles prepared by Porter and others; autobiographical, biographical, and genealogical material; maps; a few photographs; financial and legal papers; annotated printed matter; and scrapbooks.

Much of the collection relates to Porter's court-martial and cashiering out of military service in 1863 following criticism of his conduct on August 29, 1862, during the battle of 2nd Manassas, or 2nd Bull Run, and his attempt to obtain reinstatement and honorable retirement. In 1879 Porter secured a review of his case by a board of general officers which reported in his favor. There is also considerable material relating to congressional action and a presidential pardon in Porter's case. There are many personal letters from fellow officers supporting Porter's allegations against Generals John Pope and Irvin McDowell, whom Porter charged with incompetence and slander. There is also considerable material concerning the conduct of the 5th Army Corps under Porter's leadership in the Peninsular Campaign and the Battles of Malvern Hill, 2nd Manassas, and Antietam.

Material concerning Porter's early military career, particularly in the war with Mexico and the Utah Expedition (1857-1860), is largely in the form of autobiographical and biographical studies. There is more material concerning Porter's Texas Expedition (1861), the Harrisburg Campaign (1861), and the first Shenandoah Valley Campaign under General Robert Patterson.

Included with the Porter Papers are drafts of two unpublished biographical works and correspondence of their authors. The first, by Theodore Akerly Lord, covers Porter's military career from the Mexican War to the Shenandoah Campaign. The second, "Animus," by Carswell McClellan, is concerned primarily with Porter's court-martial. There are also extracts and transcripts by Sara M. Day in English of the German publication *Der Feldzug in Nord-Virginien im August 1862* (1881) by Ferdinand Franz Mangold.

Prominent correspondents include John C. Bullitt, Ulysses S. Grant, George Frisbie Hoar, Reverdy Johnson, George Brinton McClellan (1826-1885), George D. Ruggles, William Joyce Sewell, and Stephen Minot Weld. Span dates of correspondence noted in the original container list for the General Correspondence and Other Papers series have been altered in this revised finding aid to include enclosures and related material added at a later date. The altered dates are indicated in brackets.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in nine series:

- General Correspondence and Other Papers, 1830-1947, n.d.
- Letterbooks, 1860-1888, n.d.
- Subject File, 1792-1914, n.d.
- Articles, 1861-1862, n.d.
- Autobiographical, Biographical, and Genealogical Material, n.d.
- Miscellany, 1866-1941, n.d.
- Printed matter, 1862-1914, n.d.
- Biographical File, 1861-1949, n.d.
- Oversize, 1857-1891, n.d.

Description of Series

Container	*Series*
BOX 1-49 **REEL** 1-21	**General Correspondence and Other Papers, 1830-1947, n.d.**
	Correspondence and related material in bound volumes. Arranged chronologically. Span dates of the correspondence have been revised to include enclosures and related material added at a later date. The altered dates are indicated in brackets following the dates noted in the original finding aid.
BOX 50 **REEL** 22-23	**Letterbooks, 1860-1888, n.d.**
	Bound volumes of copies of outgoing letters and loose sheets in folders. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 51-53 **REEL** 23-25	**Subject File, 1792-1914, n.d.**
	Letters, memoranda, transcripts, printed matter, clippings, and other items. Arranged alphabetically by subject.
BOX 53 **REEL** 25	**Articles, 1861-1862, n.d.**
	Handwritten and typed copies. Arranged alphabetically by title.
BOX 53 **REEL** 25	**Autobiographical, Biographical, and Genealogical Material, n.d.**
	Autobiographical writings, biographical sketches, genealogical charts, lists, and related items. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 53-55 **REEL** 25-28	**Miscellany, 1866-1941, n.d.**
	Printed copies of Porter's letters, writings by others, maps, photographs, financial and legal papers, and other miscellaneous items. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 55-65 **REEL** 28-30	**Printed matter, 1862-1914, n.d.**
	Pamphlets, broadsides, government and published documents, congressional reports, speeches, maps, newspaper clippings, and other material. Arranged by type or topic and therein chronologically. Containers 57-65 have not been microfilmed.
BOX 66-67 **REEL** 30-31	**Biographical File, 1861-1949, n.d.**
	Writings, notes, collected material, correspondence, and related documents of Theodore Akerly Lord, Eva Porter Doggett, and Carswell McClellan concerning Porter's military career and court-martial. Arranged by name of biographer and thereunder by type of material.
BOX OV 1-10	**Oversize, 1857-1891, n.d.**
BOX OV 1-8	**Scrapbooks, 1857-1891, n.d.**
	Newspaper clippings. Arranged chronologically by volume.

BOX OV 9-10 **Miscellany, 1862, n.d.**

Maps arranged and described according to the series, folder, and containers from which they were removed. Only OV 9 is contained on Reel 27.

Container List

*Microfilm shelf no. 19,858

Container	*Contents*
BOX 1-49 **REEL** 1-21	**General Correspondence and Other Papers, 1830-1947, n.d.**
	Correspondence and related material in bound volumes. Arranged chronologically. Span dates of the correspondence have been revised to include enclosures and related material added at a later date. The altered dates are indicated in brackets following the dates noted in the original finding aid.
BOX 1 **REEL** 1	1830, May 29-1862, July 1 [1830-1896, n.d.]
BOX 2 **REEL** 1	1861, Apr. 18-May 7 [1861-1881, n.d.]
BOX 3 **REEL** 1	1861, Apr. 21-1863, Jan. 22 [1861-1893, n.d.]
BOX 4 **REEL** 2	1862, Aug. 6-1863, Feb. 28 [1862-1889, n.d.]
BOX 5 **REEL** 2	1862, Sept. 3-1863, June 14 [1862-1892, n.d.]
BOX 6 **REEL** 2	1862, June 3-1863, Jan. 22 [1862-1878, n.d.]
BOX 7 **REEL** 3	1862, June 27-1863, Oct. 23 [1862-1879, n.d.]
BOX 8 **REEL** 3	1863, Jan. 8-1866, Aug. 24 [1863-1882, n.d.]
BOX 9 **REEL** 3	1866, Aug. 26-1870, Feb. 24 [1862-1883, n.d.]
BOX 10 **REEL** 4	1868, Apr. 6-1871, Dec. 19 [1868-1871, n.d.]
BOX 11 **REEL** 4	1869, Dec. 13-1874, May 13 [1863-1947, n.d.]
BOX 12 **REEL** 4	1874, May 14-1876, Jan. 19 [1863-1907, n.d.]
BOX 13 **REEL** 5	1876, Jan. 20-1877, Dec. 31 [1876-1880, n.d.]
BOX 14 **REEL** 5	1878, Jan. 1-1879, Jan. 31 [1862-1882, n.d.]
BOX 15 **REEL** 6	1878, Mar. 28-May 8 [1862-1879, n.d.]
BOX 16 **REEL** 6	1878, Apr. 12-Oct. 22 [1878-1885, n.d.]
BOX 17 **REEL** 7	1878, July 2-Aug. 27 [1878-1879, n.d.]
BOX 18 **REEL** 7	1878, Aug. 28-Sept. 30 [1862-1878, n.d.]
BOX 19	1878, Oct. 1-Dec. 30 [1862-1879, n.d.]

Container	*Contents*
REEL 8	
BOX 20	1878, Dec. 31-1879, Mar. 31 [1878-1884, n.d.]
REEL 8	
BOX 21	1879, Apr. 1-June 23 [1879, n.d.]
REEL 9	
BOX 22	1879, June 24-1880, Jan. 21 [1878-1890, n.d]
REEL 9	
BOX 23	1880, Jan. 22-May 22 [1880-1881, n.d.]
REEL 10	
BOX 24	1880, May 12-Sept. 12 [1880, n.d.]
REEL 10	
BOX 25	1880, Sept. 15-Dec. 23 [1880, n.d.]
REEL 10	
BOX 26	1880, Dec. 24-1881, Feb. 15 [1879-1882, n.d.]
REEL 11	
BOX 27	1881, Feb. 16-Sept. 29 [1862-1883, n.d.]
REEL 11	
BOX 28	1881, Sept. 30-Dec. 28 [1862-1883, n.d.]
REEL 12	
BOX 29	1881, Dec. 27-1882, Feb. 2 [1880-1882, n.d.]
REEL 12	
BOX 30	1882, Feb. 4-May 20 [1880-1886, n.d.]
REEL 12	
BOX 31	1882, May 22-Oct. 2 [1882, n.d.]
REEL 13	
BOX 32	1882, Oct. 2-Dec. 29 [1882-1883, n.d.]
REEL 13	
BOX 33	1882, Dec. 30-1883, Mar. 14 [1882-1883, n.d.]
REEL 14	
BOX 34	1883, Mar. 2-1884, Feb. 6 [1861-1892, n.d.]
REEL 14	
BOX 35	1884, Feb. 8-1886, Mar. 1 [1862-1884, n.d.]
REEL 15	
BOX 36	1886, Mar. 3-June 26 [1886, n.d.]
REEL 15	
BOX 37	1886, June 27-July 2 [1886, n.d.]
REEL 16	
BOX 38	1886, July 3-26 [1879-1886, n.d.]
REEL 16	
BOX 39	1886, July 27-1888, May 22 [1862-1891, n.d.]
REEL 17	
BOX 40	1888, May 1-Dec. 27 [1887-1891, n.d.]
REEL 17	
BOX 41	1889, "Granger's Review"
REEL 17	
BOX 42	1889, Jan. 11-Nov. 30 [1862-1889, n.d.]
REEL 18	
BOX 43	1889, Dec. 3-1891, Mar. 27 [1862-1891, n.d.]
REEL 18	
BOX 44	1891, Mar. 28-1892, Nov. 3 [1890-1892, n.d.]

Container	*Contents*
REEL 19	
BOX 45 **REEL** 19	1892, Nov. 7-1895, May 6 [1863-1895, n.d.]
BOX 46 **REEL** 20	1895, May 7-1897, Sept. 9 [1862-1897, n.d.]
BOX 47 **REEL** 20	1897, Sept. 10-1898, Aug. 16 [1862-1898, n.d.]
BOX 48 **REEL** 21	1898, Aug. 17-1899, Dec. 27 [1897-1899, n.d.]
BOX 49 **REEL** 21	1899, Dec. 22-1904, Jan. 30 [1849-1904, n.d.]
BOX 50 **REEL** 22-23	**Letterbooks, 1860-1888, n.d.**
	Bound volumes of copies of outgoing letters and loose sheets in folders. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 50 **REEL** 22-23	1860, Nov. 1 - 1861, Mar. 30 (loose sheets)
	1862, Aug. 26 - 1863, Feb. 2; 1876, Oct. 24
	1862, Oct. 8 (single sheet)
	1864, Aug. 26 - 1871, Apr. 221; 1887, July 25 - Nov. 7
	1869, Dec. 11 - 1871, Dec. 15 (loose sheets)
	1878, May 10 - 1879, June 11 (loose sheets)
	1880, May 24 - 1883, Mar. 21
	1883, Mar. 30 - 1888, July 29
	1884, Mar. 23 - Nov. 16 (loose sheets)
	Undated fragments (loose sheets)
BOX 51-53 **REEL** 23-25	**Subject File, 1792-1914, n.d.**
	Letters, memoranda, transcripts, printed matter, clippings, and other items. Arranged alphabetically by subject.
BOX 51 **REEL** 23-25	Ascent in balloon at Yorktown, Va., 1862
	Battles of 1st and 2nd Bull Run, 1861-1862
	(2 folders)
	Court-martial and trial
	Proceedings of the court, 1862-1863
	Retrial, n.d.
	Memoranda regarding members of the court, n.d.
	Cox, Jacob D., 1880, n.d.
	Garfield, James A., n.d.
	Grant, Ulysses S., n.d.
	Holt, Joseph, n.d.
	Johnston, Albert S., 1861, n.d.
	Logan, John A., 1872, 1881-1883, n.d.
	McClellan, George Brinton (1826-1885), 1862, 1885, n.d.

Container	*Contents*
BOX 52 **REEL** 24-25	McDowell, Irvin, 1862-1863, n.d.
	Pope, John, 1862, 1869, n.d.
	Sherman, William T., n.d.
	Wallace, Lew, n.d.
	House and Senate debates, 1880, 1886-1890, n.d. (2 folders)
	Relief of Porter by Congress, n.d.
	Petitions and memorials to Congress, 1874, n.d.
	Presidential pardon, n.d.
	List and bibliographies, 1863-1878, 1895, n.d.
BOX 53 **REEL** 25	Equestrian statue of Porter, 1903
	Fifth Army Corps, 1861-1862
	Patterson, Robert, 1792-1881 Pension for Harriet Pierson Porter, 1902-1914
BOX 53 **REEL** 25	**Articles, 1861-1862, n.d.**
	Handwritten and typed copies. Arranged alphabetically by title.
BOX 53 **REEL** 25	"An incident of Army Life among the Mormons during the Utah troubles of 1859 to 1860," including extracts from diary, n.d.
	"Texas Expedition," 1861
	"Harrisburg Campaign," 1861
	"Balloon Services," 1861-1862
	Miscellany relating to Porter's court-martial, n.d.
BOX 53 **REEL** 25	**Autobiographical, Biographical, and Genealogical Material, n.d.**
	Autobiographical writings, biographical sketches, genealogical charts, lists, and related items. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 53 **REEL** 25	"A Cursory (but truthful) Narrative of my Recollections and Connections with the Rebellion," n.d.
	General, n.d.
BOX 53-55 **REEL** 25-28	**Miscellany, 1866-1941, n.d.**
	Printed copies of Porter's letters, writings by others, maps, photographs, financial and legal papers, and other miscellaneous items. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 53 **REEL** 25	Copies of Porter letters in the *Collector*, 1866-1889, 1941
	Meade, George, account of Battle of Gettysburg, n.d.
	General, 1874-1884, n.d.
BOX 54 **REEL** 25-26	“Campaign in Northern Virginia in August 1882, “ translation from German by Sara M. Day of *Der Feldzug in Nord-Virginien im August 1862* (1881) by Ferdinand Franz Mangold, n.d.

Container	*Contents*
	Typewritten extracts
	Handwritten transcripts
	(8 folders)
BOX 55 **REEL** 27	Maps, n.d. *See also Oversize*
	(4 folders)
BOX 55 **REEL** 28	Photographs, n.d.
	Financial and legal papers, n.d.
BOX 55-65 **REEL** 28-30	**Printed matter, 1862-1914, n.d.**
	Pamphlets, broadsides, government and published documents, congressional reports, speeches, maps, newspaper clippings, and other material.
	Arranged by type or topic and therein chronologically. Containers 57-65 have not been microfilmed.
BOX 55 **REEL** 28	Miscellaneous
	1862-1878, n.d.
	(7 folders)
BOX 56 **REEL** 28-30	1879-1905, n.d.
	(13 folders)
BOX 57 Not filmed	1880-1881, 1897, n.d.
	Newspaper clippings
	Court-martial, vindication, and related matters, 1861-1900, 1906, 1912-1914
	(6 folders)
	Whitehead, John, articles by, 1883-1884
BOX 58	Porter court-martial
	Court Martial Proceedings, 1863
	Copy 1 with tipped-in documents
	Copy 2
BOX 59	Documents
	Vol. 1, 1862-1878
	Vol. 2, 1862-1874, 1882
BOX 60	Vol. 3, 1879-1886
	Extracts from *Congressional Record*
	1880-1883
BOX 61	1883-1886
	Pamphlets in Case of Gen. Fitz-John Porter, 1862-1889
	Papers in the F. J. Porter Case, 1880-1882
BOX 62	*Proceedings and Reports of a Board of Army Officers*, 1879
	Accompanying maps
	Part I
BOX 63	Part I (different edition)
	Part II

Container	*Contents*
BOX 64	Part III
	Speeches
	By John A. Logan, 1882-1883
BOX 65	In Congress, 1880-1886
	Sketch maps of 2nd Battle of Manassas with notations by Porter, 1862 *See also Oversize*
BOX 66-67 **REEL** 30-31	**Biographical File, 1861-1949, n.d.**
	Writings, notes, collected material, correspondence, and related documents of Theodore Akerly Lord, Eva Porter Doggett, and Carswell McClellan concerning Porter's military career and court-martial.
	Arranged by name of biographer and thereunder by type of material.
BOX 66 **REEL** 30	Lord, Theodore Akerly
	Draft of an unpublished biography, n.d.
	"The Mexican War"
	"The Utah Expedition"
	"The Texas Expedition"
	"The Mission to Harrisburg"
	"General Patterson's Campaign"
	Correspondence, 1889-1904
	Doggett, Eva Porter, correspondence, 1934-1949
BOX 67	McClellan, Carswell
REEL 30-31	Draft of an unpublished biography entitled “Animus”
	Holograph, n.d.
	Typescripts and notes, n.d.
	Collected material, 1880-1992
	Correspondence, 1889-1992
	Notes on “Abraham Lincoln, a History," n.d.
	Miscellany, n.d.
BOX OV 1-10	**Oversize, 1857-1891, n.d.**
BOX OV 1-8	**Scrapbooks, 1857-1891, n.d.**
	Newspaper clippings.
	Arranged chronologically by volume.
	1857-1859
	1862-1890
BOX OV 2	1862, 1866-1880
	1863-1870, George Brinton McClellan (1826-1885)
BOX OV 3	1863-1866
	1870-1879
	1875-1879
BOX OV 4	1876-1878
	1878
	1878-1886

Oversize, 1857-1891, n.d.

Container	*Contents*
BOX OV 5	1879-1880
	1879-1881
	1879-1882
BOX OV 6	1879-1884
	1880-1886
BOX OV 7	1880-1887, compiled by C. W. Moulton (d. 1888)
	1883-1884
BOX OV 8	1883-1886
	1886-1887
	1891, history of the Civil War
BOX OV 9-10	**Miscellany, 1862, n.d.**
	Maps arranged and described according to the series, folder, and containers from which they were removed. Only OV 9 is contained on Reel 27.
	Maps, n.d. (Container 55; Reel 27)
BOX OV 10	Sketch maps of 2nd Battle of Manassas, with notations by Porter, 1862 (Container 65)