

MS-138: Oscar D. Ladley Papers

Collection Number: MS-138

Title: Oscar D. Ladley Papers

Dates: 1857-1880

Creators: Ladley, Oscar Derostus, 1837-1880

Summary/Abstract:

Oscar D. Ladley was a career army officer who fought in the Civil War with Company G, 75th Regiment of the Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He was later assigned to Fort Sully in the Dakota Territories. His papers consist primarily of letters written to his mother and sisters in Yellow Springs, Ohio, telling of his Civil War experiences, and later, his life as a frontier army officer. Also included are some Civil War military records.

Quantity/Physical Description: 1 linear foot

Language(s): English

Repository:

Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092

Restrictions on Access: There are no restrictions on accessing material in this collection.

Restrictions on Use:

Copyright restrictions may apply. Unpublished manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

Preferred Citation:

[Box Number, Folder Number], MS-138, Oscar D. Ladley Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

Acquisition:

The papers of Oscar D. Ladley Papers were donated to Wright State University Special Collections and Archives and Special Collections in 1980 by Ladley's great grandnieces and grandnephew (descendants of his sister Mary Ladley Carr): Corrine Odiorne Pelzl, Eve Odiorne Pelzl, and Ken Odiorne. The collection was accessioned in October 1982.

Alternative Form Available:

All Civil War-era letters from Series I: Correspondence (159 items from Box 1, Folders 1-9) have been digitized and are available online in Wright State University's Campus Online Repository (CORE Scholar): http://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/special_ms138/.

Related Material:

MS-117: Derostus F. Ladley Papers

MS-155: Ladley/Carr/Totten/Harris/Odiorne Families Photographs

MS-161: Louise Odiorne Papers

Publication Note:

The letters of Oscar D. Ladley have been published in *Hearth and Knapsack: The Ladley Letters, 1857-1880* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1988), edited by Carl M. Becker and Ritchie Thomas. A copy of this publication can be found in the archives reading room under call number E525.5 75th .L33 1988. (Occasionally, a discrepancy is found between the original materials and what is published in *Hearth and Knapsack*. Where these discrepancies have been identified, they are noted in this finding aid with a footnote on the relevant folder title.)

Processed by: Archives staff, circa 1982. Revised by Lisa Rickey, April 2014.

Arrangement:

The papers are arranged into 2 series:

Series I: Correspondence

Series II: Military Records and Papers

Biographical/Historical Note

Oscar Derostus Ladley was born about 1837 in Cincinnati, Ohio, the eldest child of Rev. Derostus F. Ladley and Catherine (Griffiths) Ladley. Oscar had two younger sisters: Mary (born about 1844) and Alice (born about 1846). Derostus Ladley served as a minister in several Ohio towns before moving his family to Yellow Springs, Ohio, in 1852. Oscar attended Antioch College from 1853 to 1857. After leaving school, Oscar took employment in Columbus but returned to Yellow Springs in 1858, where he worked as a clerk in a dry goods store.

On April 23, 1861, less than two weeks after the Civil War began, Oscar enlisted. He served his first 90 days as a private in Company E, 16th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Then, he re-enlisted for three years, serving in Company G, 75th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. The 75th fought at a number of minor battles, as well as at Second Bull Run, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg. Oscar eventually reached the rank of captain in April 1864. He was mustered out at Jacksonville, Florida, in January 1865.

Oscar returned to the U.S. Army as a career in 1867. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the 22nd United States Infantry. He was stationed at Fort Sully in the Dakota Territory for about 7 years. From 1874 onward, he had a number of assignments, including: New Orleans; Madison Barracks in New York; Fort Wayne and Fort Mackinaw in Michigan; Fort Gibson in the Indian Territory; and Fort Lewis in Colorado.

In February 1877 in Washington, DC, Oscar married Clementine Eulalia Davidson, a young woman whom he had met a few years earlier while stationed in New York. They had at least one

child, a daughter named Clementine, who was born about 1879 in Michigan and married Edward Olmsted in 1901.

Oscar died of pneumonia on January 11, 1880, near Farmington, New Mexico. He is buried at Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery in Kansas. Oscar's wife Clementine died in 1924.

Scope and Content

The Oscar D. Ladley Papers consist primarily of letters written to his mother and sisters in Yellow Springs, Ohio, telling of his Civil War experiences, and later, his life as a frontier army officer. Also included are some Civil War military records. The collection is arranged into 2 series.

Series I, Correspondence, contains letters written to and from Oscar Ladley, his mother, Catherine Ladley (*see also MS-117*), and his two younger sisters, Mary and Alice Ladley. Oscar wrote mainly about his experiences in the Civil War and later, his life as a frontier Army officer in the Dakota Territory. Ladley's mother and sisters wrote of friends and events back home in Yellow Springs, Ohio, politics, friends in the Army, marriages, deaths and activities at Antioch College. The correspondence in this series is arranged chronologically within each file folders and covers the years 1857-1880. All Civil War-era letters from this series (159 items) have been digitized and are available online in Wright State University's Campus Online Repository (CORE Scholar): http://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/special_ms138/.

Series II, Military Records and Papers, contains a collection papers concerning Ladley's Civil War service. Included are his commission papers, some routine quartermaster's reports, copies of orders and announcements. The documents in this series span the Civil War years, 1861-1865.

Subject Terms

Persons/Families

Ladley, Oscar Derostus, 1837-1880 -- Manuscripts

Organization/Corporate Names

United States. Army. Ohio Infantry, 75th (1861-1865) -- Correspondence

United States. Army. 22d Infantry -- Correspondence

Places

Yellow Springs (Ohio)

Dakota Territory

Subjects (General)

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

Soldiers -- Ohio -- Correspondence

Material Types

Correspondence

Collection Inventory

Box	File	Description	Date
Series I: Correspondence			1857-1880
1	1	Correspondence *	1857-1861
1	2	Correspondence ¹ *	1862 Jan.-May
1	3	Correspondence *	1862 July-Dec.
1	4	Correspondence *	1863 Jan.-Mar.
1	5	Correspondence *	1863 Apr.-June
1	6	Correspondence *	1863 July-Dec.
1	7	Correspondence *	1864 Jan.-May
1	8	Correspondence *	1864 June-Dec.
1	9	Correspondence *	1865-1866
1	10	Correspondence	1867 Jan.-June
1	11	Correspondence	1867 June-Dec.
2	1	Correspondence	1868 Jan.-June
2	2	Correspondence	1868 July-Dec.
2	3	Correspondence	1869 Jan.-June
2	4	Correspondence	1869 July-Dec.
2	5	Correspondence	1870 Jan.-June
2	6	Correspondence	1870 July-Dec.
2	7	Correspondence	1871
2	8	Correspondence	1872-1873
2	9	Correspondence	1876-1880
Series II: Military Records and Papers			1861-1865
2	10	Military Records and Papers	1861-1865

* All Civil War-era items from these folders have been digitized and are available online in Wright State University's Campus Online Repository (CORE Scholar):
http://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/special_ms138/.

¹ Three 1862 letters contained in Box 1, Folder 2, are identified as 1863 in *Hearth and Knapsack*; these letters are: April 2, 1862; April 6, 1862; and May 13, 1862.