

Collection #
M 0262
OM 0056
F 0353

EPHRAIM GEORGE SQUIER PAPERS, 1838-1905

Collection Information	1
Biographical Sketch	2
Scope and Content Note	3
Contents	5

Processed by
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April 1989
May 1994

Updated 2 January 2002
Updated 15 December 2004

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 3 manuscript boxes, 3 oversize manuscript folders, 1 photograph folder, 2 OVA photograph folders, 1 OVB photograph folder, 1 roll microfilm

COLLECTION DATES: 1838-1905

PROVENANCE: Gift of Eli Lilly, Indianapolis, 1958; microfilm made in July 1971

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: Portion of collection microfilmed

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1958.0002, 1971.0705

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ephraim George Squier (he usually signed his name "E. George") (1821-1888) was born in Bethlehem, N.Y., the son of Joel and Catherine (Kilmer) Squier. Though he had little formal schooling, he did enough studying by himself to become a distinguished scholar. His early experience included farm work, teaching, and civil engineering. He became the editor of several small newspapers, some of which were quite short-lived. Moving to Chillicothe, Ohio, in the mid-1840s, he edited the *Scioto Gazette*, and served as Clerk of the Ohio House of Representatives (1847-1848). He then studied the Mound Builders of the Mississippi Valley, and produced a work about them, which became the first publication of the newly founded Smithsonian Institution. This was followed by an equally authoritative work on Aboriginal Monuments of the State of New York (1851). These works gained Squier the acquaintance of several prominent writers, such as O. W. Holmes, Francis Parkman, and William H. Prescott.

In 1849, through the influence of Prescott, Squier was appointed charge d'affaires to Central America. During the next four years he negotiated a treaty (never ratified) with Nicaragua for an American-built canal, and studied the route for a transcontinental railroad across Honduras.

About 1860 Squier became chief editor for Frank Leslie's publishing house, and was responsible for beginning the publication of a pictorial history of the Civil War. His work for Leslie's continued for another decade, but was interrupted from 1863 to 1865 by his appointment as U. S. commissioner to Peru to settle financial claims between the two countries.

In 1858 Squier became the second husband of Miriam Florence Follin, an able lady who also worked for Leslie. In 1873 she divorced Squier and married Leslie, who also obtained a divorce after a "particularly unhappy" marriage. She referred to this third marriage as "her one happy matrimonial experience," and ran the publishing house for twenty years after Leslie's death in 1880. She was married a fourth time, to Oscar Wilde's brother.

Squier wrote numerous articles and books about travel, archaeology, and general conditions in the nations of Central and South America. In 1874 he lost his physical and mental health. He died in 1888 after many years of illness.

Sources: Materials in collection
Article in *Dictionary of American Biography*

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection, filling three manuscript boxes, consists of letters, printed articles, transcripts, and clippings. The main body of correspondence is arranged chronologically, the rest by type of material.

The collection was given to Indiana Historical Society by Eli Lilly, along with a large collection of books owned by Squier. Mr. Lilly's interest in Squier presumably came from the fact that Squier had written the first major book about the Mound Builders of the Mississippi Valley. However, material in this manuscript collection comes almost entirely from other facets and periods of Squier's varied career, particularly his diplomatic and other activities in Central America and his work at the Leslie publishing house.

Perhaps because of the breadth of Squier's interests and the variety of his activities, his papers are located in a number of different libraries, including the following:

Library of Congress
Henry E. Huntington Library
William L. Clements Library (University of Michigan)
New-York Historical Society
Western Reserve Historical Society
John Carter Brown Library (Brown University)
Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia
Ridgway Library, Philadelphia

In this collection, Box 1 (Folders 1-20) contains Squier's correspondence, spanning the period 1842-1874, almost entirely letters written to Squier. Some of the letters are in Spanish, and are accompanied by translations made by Eleanor Dunn Moore in 1960. There is one folder (Folder 21) of letters written after Squier's breakdown, mainly to and from his nephew Frank Squier who administered his literary estate.

Folders 23-25 contain typed transcripts of letters to Squier by Francis Parkman, David Dixon Porter, and other notables. The location of the originals of these letters is not indicated. Folders 26-28 contain printed correspondence of Squier: an 1850 letter to Joseph Henry of the Smithsonian, forwarding various antiquities from Nicaragua to the museum; and correspondence in Spanish concerning his missions to Central America in 1849-1853. Folder 29 contains two short pieces, apparently in Squier's handwriting, on the Seneca and Algonquin Indians. Folders 30-32 contain printed articles by Squier, notably his contributions to the Encyclopaedia Britannica on parts of Central and South America. Folder 33 contains material about the Honduras Inter-Oceanic railway in which Squier had an interest, Folder 39 an 1860 flyer advertising the SS Osceola of which he was co-owner. Folders 38-40 contain clippings and notes found between the pages of books in the Squier collection.

In Box 2 are several scrapbooks and notebooks kept by Squier, along with items laid in these notebooks. These include a scrapbook and diary for 1839 (Folder 1; scrapbook of poems by Squier and of reviews of his work (Folder 3); and two notebooks with writings on archaeology (Folders 4 and 6).

In Box 3 are a notebook with the 1849 charter of a company to build a ship canal across Nicaragua, with text in both Spanish and English (Folder 1); and a scrapbook dated 1868 apparently kept by Squier's nephew Frank.

In Oversize OM 0056 are a number of drawings and maps of archaeological sites, and photostats of an 1850 article on Nicaragua. In rolled storage in this collection are four panels of a drawing entitled "View of Plain of Leon."

A calendar of Squier's correspondence, with an index of correspondence, is available in the Indiana Historical Society Library.

Some of the material in this collection, including a listing, a biographical summary and other biographical material, and correspondence, is recorded on microfilm F 0353.

CONTENTS

BOX 1

CONTENTS

Biographical

Obituaries

Re: Mrs. Squier's first marriage

Squier correspondence--1842

Squier correspondence --1843-1844

Squier correspondence --1845-1849

Squier correspondence --1851

Squier correspondence --1852-1853

Squier correspondence --1854

Squier correspondence --1855

Squier correspondence --1856

Squier correspondence --1857-1858

Squier correspondence --1859

Squier correspondence --1860

Squier correspondence --1863-1864

Squier correspondence --1865

Squier correspondence --1866-1867

Squier correspondence --1868

Squier correspondence --1869

Squier correspondence --1870-1874

CONTAINER

Box 1, Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 4

Box 1, Folder 5

Box 1, Folder 6

Box 1, Folder 7

Box 1, Folder 8

Box 1, Folder 9

Box 1, Folder 10

Box 1, Folder 11

Box 1, Folder 12

Box 1, Folder 13

Box 1, Folder 14

Box 1, Folder 15

Box 1, Folder 16

Box 1, Folder 17

Box 1, Folder 18

Box 1, Folder 19

Box 1, Folder 20

Squier correspondence --1874-1905	Box 1, Folder 21
Squier correspondence --n.d.	Box 1, Folder 22
Transcripts of correspondence From Francis Parkman, 1849-1868	Box 1, Folder 23
Transcripts of correspondence From David Dixon Porter, 1869-1871	Box 1, Folder 24
Transcripts of correspondence From Others	Box 1, Folder 25
Printed Correspondence to Joseph Henry, 1850	Box 1, Folder 26
Diplomatic correspondence in Spanish, 1849	Box 1, Folder 27
Diplomatic correspondence, 1852-1853	Box 1, Folder 28
Writings – Re: Seneca and Algonquian Indians	Box 1, Folder 29
Writings – Articles in Encyclopedia Britannica	Box 1, Folder 30
Writings – Printed Articles	Box 1, Folder 31
Writings – Clippings re. EGS and Walt Whitman	Box 1, Folder 32
Business – Honduras Inter-Oceanic Railway	Box 1, Folder 33
Business – SS Osceola	Box 1, Folder 34
Honduras bond 1867	Box 1, Folder 35
Poyaisian land debenture 1868	Box 1, Folder 36
Clipping re: Dallas-Clarendon Convention 1856	Box 1, Folder 37
Notes, some in Squier's handwriting. from books in Squier collection	Box 1, Folder 38
Clippings etc. from between pages of Notes on Central America Vol. I.	Box 1, Folder 39
Clippings etc. from between pages of Notes on Central America Vol. II.	Box 1, Folder 40

BOX 2: Notebooks and Scrapbooks

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Scrapbooks and diary 1839	Box 2, Folder 1
Photostats of "The Triumph of the Mind" pp 9-17 of 1839 scrapbook	Box 2, Folder 2
Scrapbook 1839-1846; Poems by Squier; Reviews of books and magazines by Squier	Box 2, Folder 3
Notebook ca. 1845-- archaeology, Indian vocabulary	Box 2, Folder 4
Items laid in 1845 notebook	Box 2, Folder 5
Scrapbook 1847-- "Mss on American Antiquities"	Box 2, Folder 6
Items laid in 1847 scrapbook	Box 2, Folder 7

BOX 3

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Charter of Nicaraguan ship canal company, 1849	Box 3, Folder 1
Scrapbook 1868 (Frank Squier)	Box 3, Folder 2

Oversize Manuscript and Visual Materials

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Maps and drawings of archaeological sites	OM 0056, Folder 1
Photostat of New-York Daily Tribune 12-13 November 1850--long article about Nicaragua and prospects of a canal there	OM 0056, Folder 2
Four panels, "View of Plain of Leon"	OM 0056, Rolled Storage
(Flat File: FF 11-f) Maps and drawings of archaeological sites	OM 0056, Flat File, FF 11-F

Ephraim George Squier Photographs

Visual Collection:
Photographs, Folder 1

Ephraim George Squier Photographs

Visual Collection: OVA
Photographs, Folders 1-2

Ephraim George Squier Photographs

Visual Collection: OVB
Photographs, Folder 1