

# Guide to the John J. Peck Papers

WA MSS S-2655



by Lisa Conathan

2011

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** WA MSS S-2655

**CREATOR:** Peck, John J. (John James), 1821-1878

**TITLE:** John J. Peck papers

**DATES:** 1845-1970 1845-1863

**BULK DATES:** 1845-1863

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1.67 linear feet (8 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The John J. Peck Papers consist of journal entries, correspondence, and printed material, bound in eight volumes, that document Peck's military and political career. Manuscript copies of journals and outgoing letters to newspapers, family members, and military officers record his experience in the following campaigns: several battles including the Battle of Monterrey and occupation of Mexico City during the Mexican-American War; a campaign against the Navajo and Apache in New Mexico (1849-1851, including an account of a journey over the Santa Fe Trail); and the 1863 siege of Suffolk, Virginia during the American Civil War. Newspaper clippings and manuscript copies of correspondence document Peck's involvement in Democratic Party politics, including an unsuccessful run for Congress in New York State in 1856. The Papers include one typescript volume of transcriptions, presumably compiled when researching *The Sign of the Eagle*, edited by Richard F. Pourade and commissioned by James Strohn Copley in 1970.

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

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.peck>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

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

b.      box

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

From the collection of James Strohn Copley. Purchased from William Reese Co. on the Frederick W. and Carrie S. Beinecke Fund for Western Americana, 2010.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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### Conditions Governing Use

The John J. Peck Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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### Preferred Citation

John J. Peck Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## John James Peck, 1821-1878

John James Peck (1821-1878) was born in Manlius, New York and graduated from West Point in 1843. He served in the army during the Mexican-American War and in New Mexico before retiring in 1852 to pursue banking and railroad business ventures. He returned to military service during the Civil War, as a brigadier general of volunteers. After the war, Peck returned to New York State and became president of the New York State Life Insurance Company.

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## Scope and Contents

The John James Peck Papers consist of journal entries, correspondence, and printed material, bound in eight volumes, that document Peck's military and political career. Manuscript copies of journals and outgoing letters to newspapers, family members, and military officers record his experience in the following campaigns: the Battle of Buena Vista and occupation of Mexico City during the Mexican-American War; a campaign against the Navajo and Apache in New Mexico (including an account of a journey over the Santa Fe Trail); and the siege of Suffolk, Virginia during the American Civil War. Newspaper clippings and manuscript copies of correspondence document Peck's involvement in Democratic Party politics, including an unsuccessful run for Congress in 1856. The Papers include one typescript volume of transcriptions, presumably compiled when researching *The Sign of the Eagle*, edited by Richard F. Pourade and commissioned by James Strohn Copley in 1970.

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## Arrangement

Organized into eight volumes and arranged as received by the Beinecke Library.

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## Collection Contents

b. 1	Journal on Mexico volume 1 Manuscript copies of letters, journal entries, and newspaper clippings related to Mexico.	1843-1849
b. 2	Journal on Mexico volume 2 Manuscript copies of letters and newspaper clippings related to Mexico.	1849-1852
b. 3	Telegrams and letters : Suffolk, VA (manuscript copies)	1862-1863
b. 4	Letters (manuscript copies) and newspaper clippings relating to politics	1856-1861
b. 5	Newspaper clippings relating to the Mexican-American War	1847-1859
b. 6	Newspaper clippings relating to politics	1853-1860
b. 7	Newspaper clippings : obituaries, memorials, and other topics	1854-1856, undated
b. 8	Transcripts of letters and journal entries from 1845-1849, typescript (copy) Transcripts were presumably compiled while researching <i>The Sign of the Eagle</i> , Commissioned by James S. Copley. Edited by Richard F. Pourade. The Copley Press, 1970.	undated

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## 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

Apache Indians  
Indians of North America -- New Mexico --  
History -- 19th century  
Mexican War, 1846-1848 -- Campaigns  
Monterrey, Battle of, Monterrey, Mexico, 1846  
Navajo Indians

### Geographic Names

Mexico  
Mexico City (Mexico) -- History -- American  
occupation, 1847-1848  
New Mexico  
New Mexico -- Description and travel  
Santa Fe (N.M.)  
Santa Fe National Historic Trail -- Description  
and travel  
Suffolk (Va.) -- History -- Siege, 1863  
Texas -- History -- Mexican War, 1846-1848  
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865  
United States -- Territorial expansion -- 19th  
century  
Virginia -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865  
West (U.S.)

### Names

Copley, James Strohn -- Ownership  
Peck, John J. (John James), 1821-1878

### Corporate Body

Democratic Party (N.Y.)