

# Charles James Morse papers

MS 978



July 2008

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
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<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 978

**CREATOR:** Morse, Charles James, 1852-1911

**TITLE:** Charles James Morse papers

**DATES:** 1897-1911

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 16 linear feet (38 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The largest part of these papers consist of 137 volumes of translations into English, mainly from Japanese, of published works on Japanese and other branches of Oriental art. Also in the papers are two bound volumes of letters from Japan written between 1897 and 1898 by Charles James Morse and his wife, Anne Perkins Woodbridge Morse.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0978>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0978>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html). The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

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

Gift of Mrs. Jared K. Morse in 1952.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

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## Preferred Citation

Charles James Morse Papers (MS 978). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

CHARLES JAMES MORSE, second son of Henry Kirtland Morse and Mary (Lynn) Morse, was born July 7, 1852, at Poland, O. His grandfather had settled in the Western Reserve, going there from Wallingford, Conn. He was a grand nephew of Dr Jared P Kirtland (M.D Yale 1815), in whose memory Kirtland Hall was named.

He studied in Poland Union Seminary and worked two years with the city engineer of Youngstown, Ohio, then entered the Sheffield Scientific School in the winter of 1871, taking the course in Civil Engineering.

Upon graduation he was Assistant in Surveying in the School for a year, and in 1877 received the degree of Civil Engineer from Yale University.

Taking up construction work in the summer of 1875 he became assistant engineer for the Wrought Iron Bridge Co at Canton, O, and during 1876 and 1877 was engineer of the Massillon (Oh) Bridge Co. With his brother, Henry G Morse (Troy Polytechnic Inst 1871), he founded the Morse Bridge Co of Youngstown, Ohio, in 1878. With this he was actively engaged for ten years when the works were destroyed by fire. In 1889 he visited Europe with members of the American Society of Civil Engineers and other national societies. In 1890-91 he was manager of the Association of Bridge Builders, with an office in Chicago. During the latter year he became the consulting engineer and western representative of the Edgemoor Bridge Works of Wilmington, Del, and removed to Evanston, Illinois. He had charge of the construction of the Manufactures Building at the Columbian Exposition at Chicago, the Columbia River Bridge for the Great Northern Railway, the replacement of the Roebling Suspension Bridge at Covington, Ky, without suspension of travel, and many other important bridges and other structures.

In order to study oriental art, in which he had for a number of years been interested, he retired from professional work in 1897, and spent a year in Japan, visiting the great temples, museums, and private collections there. On returning home he continued his studies at Evanston, employing Japanese scholars to translate the ancient literature on the subject. In 1905 he visited Europe, and Japan again in 1907. During his years of study he collected paintings, prints, pottery, and other objects of Chinese and Japanese art, and a library of eight thousand volumes relating to art and art history, for which he built a fireproof library and vault adjoining his home. He was a member of the Royal Asiatic Society and the Asiatic Society of Japan.

Several years after his retirement he returned temporarily to engineering work, and with Julian Kennedy (Ph.B Yale 1875) and others, bought a large tract of coal land near Uniontown in Pennsylvania, where during the years 1902 to 1904 he constructed great coke works for the Orient Coal and Coke Co.

After years of suffering Mr Morse died from myocarditis at his home in Evanston, December 6, 1911, at the age of 59 years.

He married at Youngstown, Ohio, October 16, 1884, Annie Perkins Woodbndge, daughter of Dr. Timothy Woodbndge and Isabella (McCurdy) Woodbndge. Mrs Morse survived him with their eldest son, Jared Kirtland Morse (Ph B Yale 1908), twin sons having died. A brother, Edwin K Morse, graduated from the Sheffield Scientific School in 1881.

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## Scope and Contents

The largest part of these papers consist of 137 volumes of translations into English, mainly from Japanese, of published works on Japanese and other branches of Oriental art. Also in the papers are two bound volumes of letters from Japan written between 1897 and 1898 by Charles James Morse and his wife, Anne Perkins Woodbridge Morse.

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## Collection Contents

### Original accession, 1897-1911?

There is a list of titles of the translated works in the register file. Please consult reference staff.

b. 34, 33, 32, 31, 30, 29, 28, 27, 37, 36, 35, 5-6, 3-4, 14, 2, 16, 15, 13, 26, 11-12, 9-10, 7-8, 25, 23-24, 21-22, 19, 1, 20, 17-18

137 volumes of translations into English, mainly from Japanese, of published works on Japanese and other branches of Oriental art.

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b. 38

2 volumes, "Letters from Japan, 1897-98 (typed copies with photographs and sketches) by Charles James Morse and Anne Perkins (Woodbridge) Morse"

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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**

Americans -- Japan  
Art, Asian  
Art, Japanese

### **Geographic Names**

Asia  
Japan -- Description and travel

### **Names**

Morse, Ann Perkins Woodbridge  
Morse, Charles James, 1852-1911