

# A Guide to the George M. Neese Papers, 1859-1946 SC 0355

George M. Neese papers  
1859-1946



## Title Statement

A Guide to the George M. Neese Papers, 1859-1946 SC 0355

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

SC 0355

**Unit ID**

/repositories/4/resources/727

**Unit Date**

1859-1946

**Language**

English

**Abstract**

The collection comprises the personal papers, correspondence, diaries, and writings of George M. Neese of New Market, Virginia.

**source**

Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates

**Creator**

Neese, George M. (George Michael), 1839-1921

**Extent**

0.83 cubic feet 3 boxes

**Repository**

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

## Administrative Information

**Access Restrictions**

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**Acquisition Information**

Acquired at Jeffrey S. Evans's Summer Americana & Variety Auction on August 24, 2019.

**Preferred Citation**

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], George M. Neese Papers, SC 0355, 1859-1946, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Va.

## Biographical / Historical

George M. Neese (1839-1921), son of Michael and Elizabeth Zirkle Neese, was born in Shenandoah County, Virginia. As a youth, he attended New Market Academy. During the Civil War, Neese served for three years in the Confederate Army as a gunner in Chew's Battery, Stuart's Horse Artillery in the Army of Northern Virginia. He was captured approximately six miles north of Woodstock, Virginia on October 9, 1864. Neese was held as a prisoner at Point Lookout, Maryland for the remainder of the Civil War. After the war ended and he was released, Neese returned to Shenandoah County where he worked as a fresco painter, house painter, and wallpaper hanger for William F. Rupp. Neese also lived with Rupp's family in the Spitzer-Rupp House on Congress Street until his death in 1921. Neese kept diaries about his experience during the Civil War and published them under the title *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery* (1911).

## Scope and Contents

The collection comprises the personal papers, correspondence, diaries, and writings of George M. Neese of New Market, Virginia.

Correspondence is primarily letters, postcards, and direct mail addressed to Neese.

Neese's personal papers comprise, among other materials, a handwritten draft manuscript of *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery*, post-Civil War diaries, field books documenting bird sightings around New Market, and poetry.

## Separated Materials

A copy of *The People's Pocket Dictionary of the Holy Bible* with George Neese's owner's signature was separated from the collection and cataloged individually.

## Related Materials

George M. Neese. Papers, 1859-1921. Accession 13994. Personal papers collection. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. 23219.

Rupp Family Papers, 1831-1973, SC 0342, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University,

Harrisonburg, VA.

New Market Poll Book, 1870 May 26, SC 0356, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Va.

## Keywords

Diaries

Letters (correspondence)

Postcards

Manuscripts (documents)

Drafts (documents)

Research notes

Autograph albums

Direct mail

Birds -- Virginia -- New Market

Bird watching -- Virginia -- New Market

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Personal narratives, Confederate

Virginia -- History -- 19th century

New Market (Va.) -- History

Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates

Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Artillery

## Appraisal

A copy of *Sketches accompanying the Annual report of the Superintendent of the United States Coast Survey* (1851) was not retained due to its poor condition. All loose items were removed and incorporated into the collection. Pages with substantive annotations were photocopied and retained.

## Provenance

From the Fritz and Loretta Orebaugh estate, New Market, Virginia.

## Arrangement

The collection is arranged in two series:

- Correspondence, 1868-1946
- Personal papers, 1859-1921

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Correspondence

**Unit ID** 1

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28957

**Unit Date** 1868-1946

### Scope and Contents

Series 1: Correspondence, 1869-1946, comprises correspondence, postcards, and direct mail sent to George M. Neese and includes letters from business owners, private individuals, family members, and government officials.

Correspondence related to the publication of Neese's Civil War diaries under the title *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery* includes letters from John W. Daniel, U.S. Senator from Lynchburg, Virginia, who was assisting Neese with publication. A 1946 letter to Fritz Orebaugh (through whose family the papers descended) requests to compare the original Civil War diaries against the published book to distinguish contemporary notes from additions made after the war. A 1920 letter from Henry Read McIlwaine, Virginia State Librarian, to George Neese concerns Neese's donation of materials including his original Civil War diaries to the Virginia State Library (now Library of Virginia). Correspondence with Neale Publishing as well as a carbon copy of Neese's 1908 publishing contract with them is included.

Correspondence from Neese's family in Memphis, Missouri, specifically the family of Neese's brother Aaron and nephew Jacob, discusses family matters, deaths, and provides general updates.

Correspondence from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Biological Survey acknowledges Neese's submitted notes on the spring migration of birds at New Market.

Correspondence from Theodore Schuster from Brooklyn, New York concerns acquisition of plants, flowers, bulbs, and seeds.

**General correspondence**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28978

**Unit Date** 1868-1914

**Mixed Materials [1000897411]** 1 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**General correspondence**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28985

**Unit Date** 1870-1920

**Mixed Materials [1000897411]** 1 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**General correspondence**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28963

**Unit Date** 1873-1906

**Mixed Materials [1000897411]** 1 (box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

**General correspondence**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28977

**Unit Date** 1873-1911

**Mixed Materials [1000897411]** 1 (box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

**General correspondence**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28964

**Unit Date** undated

**Mixed Materials [1000897411]** 1 (box)

**Container** 5 (folder)

**Postcards**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28965

**Unit Date** 1873-1905

**Mixed Materials [1000897411]** 1 (box)

**Container** 6 (folder)

**Postcards**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28956

**Unit Date** 1875-1904

**Mixed Materials [1000897411]** 1 (box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

### **Theodore Schuster correspondence**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28960

**Unit Date** 1874-1878

**Mixed Materials [1000897411]** 1 (box)

**Container** 8 (folder)

### **Direct mail**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28984

**Unit Date** 1875-1885

**Mixed Materials [1000897411]** 1 (box)

**Container** 9 (folder)

### **Neese family in Missouri correspondence**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28962

**Unit Date** 1877-1905

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

### **Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery correspondence**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28959

**Unit Date** 1895-1946

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

### **U.S. Department of Agriculture, Biological Survey correspondence**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28961

**Unit Date** 1898-1904

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

### **Personal papers**

**Unit ID** 2

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28958

**Unit Date** 1859-1921

#### **Scope and Contents**

Series 2: Personal Papers, 1859-1921, comprises the writings, diaries, ledgers, photographs, and assorted personal papers of George M. Neese. The series also includes several handwritten poems that are unattributed but may have been written by Neese.

Of note is Neese's draft manuscript of *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery* which was published by Neale Publishing in 1911. The manuscript is largely complete and includes numbered pages 5 through 217 with some unnumbered pages and gaps. The draft covers almost the entirety of the published diary. The draft is written on poor quality scraps of paper including calendar pages and advertisements. The original diaries that served as the basis for Neese's book are held by the Library of Virginia.

Twenty-four diaries and loose diary entries document Neese's daily activities, work conducted as a painter and wallpaper hanger, weather, deaths, and other community news.

Neese kept notebooks documenting bird sightings in New Market. He included the date, species, and number of birds for each sighting.

According to notations on the front page, the address "In New Market Cemetery" was given by Charles Bemis Bliss on the occasion of Memorial Day 1911. It is dated May 28, 1911.

### **Diary/ledger**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28973

**Unit Date** 1859-1874

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

#### **Loose diary entries, accounts**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28976

**Unit Date** 1866-1878

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 5 (folder)

#### **Ledger**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28974

**Unit Date** 1866-1903

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 6 (folder)

#### **Diaries**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28970

**Unit Date** 1881-1899

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

#### **Diaries**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28971

**Unit Date** 1900-1907

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 8 (folder)

#### **Diaries**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28972

**Unit Date** 1908-1916

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 9 (folder)

#### **Loose items removed from Sketches accompanying the Annual report of the Superintendent of the United States Coast Survey (1851)**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28968

**Unit Date** 1862, undated

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 10 (folder)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Includes scanned pages with annotations.

#### **Promissory note for purchase of organ for St. Matthews Church**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28982

**Unit Date** circa 1878

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 11 (folder)

**Autograph album**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28975

**Unit Date** 1879-1881

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 12 (folder)

**Bird field books**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28969

**Unit Date** 1884-1917

**Mixed Materials [1000897412]** 2 (box)

**Container** 13 (folder)

**Draft manuscript of Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28966

**Unit Date** circa 1894

**Mixed Materials [1000897413]** 3 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**Printed muster roll for the Confederate States Army**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28987

**Unit Date** circa 1905

**Mixed Materials [1000897413]** 3 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**"In New Market Cemetery", Memorial Day address by C[harles] B[emis] Bliss**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28967

**Unit Date** 1911 May 28

**Mixed Materials [1000897413]** 3 (box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

**Scope and Contents**

Address was given fifty years after the beginning of the Civil War. Discussion of the results of the Civil War from the perspective of Massachusetts pastor C.B. Bliss. Invokes Lost Cause narratives.

**George M. Neese at St. Matthews Church photographs**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28983

**Unit Date** circa 1920

**Mixed Materials [1000897413]** 3 (box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

**Poetry**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28979

**Unit Date** undated

**Mixed Materials [1000897413]** 3 (box)

**Container** 5 (folder)

**Directions for papering hall**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28981

**Unit Date** undated

**Mixed Materials [1000897413]** 3 (box)

**Container** 6 (folder)

**Ephemera, "Geo M Neese" signature stencil**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28986

**Unit Date** undated

**Mixed Materials [1000897413]** 3 (box)

**Container** 7 (folder)