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Bowles, Orlando Charles, 1839-1896 (MSS 455)

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Orlando C. Bowles was born in Sandusky, Ohio in 1839. He was educated at Oberlin College in Ohio, and was employed as a teacher at the time of the outbreak of the Civil War. During the war, Bowles served in the U. S. Army as a captain under Colonel (then Brigadier-General and later President) James A. Garfield. In 1863, while stationed in Pikeville, Kentucky (sometimes referred to in this collection by its earlier name, Piketon), Bowles married Pauline Cecil (1839-1909), the daughter of Judge William Cecil and Elizabeth Ratliff. Pauline had an uncle and a brother who were both named Colbert Cecil.

Orlando Bowles remained in Pikeville after the war, where he farmed, practiced law, and served in the Kentucky House of Representatives from 1867-1871 and 1875-1877. He also traded in timber, which he floated down the Big Sandy and Ohio rivers to market in Cincinnati. Bowles built at least two steamboats and actively promoted the development of the Pikeville community. He and his wife were the parents of five sons.

COLLECTION NOTE

This collection consists primarily of correspondence and other personal papers of Orlando C. Bowles. An inventory is in Folder 1. Many of the documents are damaged, faded, or otherwise in poor condition.

Folder 2 contains business and personal correspondence of Orlando C. Bowles. Included are letters from former school friends in Ohio describing their activities, and frequently their work as schoolteachers. Letters written to Bowles during the Civil War (but after he had left military service) include one from a colleague describing the action his Ohio regiment saw in Georgia in 1863; others relate to an attempt to secure a new military command for Bowles in 1864. While Bowles was working in Louisa, Kentucky, letters from his brother-in-law and wife refer, respectively, to a skirmish in Pike County and to support for guerrilla leader John Hunt Morgan as he passed through Prestonsburg, Kentucky. Christopher Murty, who signs as Bowles’s “affectionate father,” writes from Sandusky County, Ohio of his loyalty to the Democratic Party and his refusal to vote the “black ticket.” Letters written to Bowles in 1865
discuss the excitement over oil well development in Kentucky’s Big Sandy Valley. Personal correspondence includes letters from his wife’s uncle Colbert Cecil, and a joint letter from Fallsburg, Ohio of Nancy E. Balcom, who addresses him as “brother,” and another correspondent who signs as “mother.”

Folder 3 contains correspondence dealing mostly with Bowles’s legal work and trade in timber. An 1867 letter of Bowles to his wife reports on his arrival at the Kentucky House of Representatives in Frankfort and instructs her regarding the care of horses and cattle at home. An 1878 letter from a Cincinnati merchant describes the effect on local banks of the Sherman Resumption Act providing for the redemption of paper currency in gold.

Folder 4 contains correspondence dealing with business and legal matters, including the provision of rafts for Bowles’s timber trading. A few letters from newspapers and other supporters refer to his candidacy for a circuit court judgeship in 1880 and to another (unsuccessful) candidacy for office in 1892. Undated letters from Bowles’s wife discuss local and domestic matters. Also included are letters from Pauline Bowles to an unnamed son, possibly written to him while he was away at school. Letters written by third parties to Bowles’s son Colbert Cecil Bowles (referred to sometimes as “Bigger”) relate to his work as a clothing salesman in 1890.

Folders 5 through 8 contain surveys of land, mostly in Pike County, Kentucky. Many of these relate to landholdings of Pauline Bowles’s father, William Cecil.

Folder 9 contains legal papers of Orlando Bowles relating to payment of bounties and back pay to Civil War soldiers. Folder 10 contains other miscellaneous papers relating to Bowles’s legal practice. Folders 11 and 12 contain various household and business account records of Orlando C. Bowles.

Folder 13 contains materials relating to Pauline Bowles’s father and uncle, William Cecil and Colbert Cecil. Most relate to directions to assign land warrants entered in the office of William Cecil as surveyor of Pike County. Directions to Colbert Cecil outline the manner in which he is to self-administer some medication.

Folder 14 contains mostly accounts and receipts of third parties, probably relating to Bowles’s legal work. Folder 15 contains miscellaneous printed matter relating to politics and schools, including an 1860 Oberlin College class program, Bowles’s certificate as an alternate delegate for Kentucky’s 9th District to the National Democratic Convention of 1868, an 1870 handbill for the Department of Law and Equity at Washington College, Lexington, Virginia, and a blank application for inspection of a steamboat.

SHELF LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOX 1</th>
<th>Orlando C. Bowles</th>
<th>1825-1892</th>
<th>320 items</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folder 1</td>
<td>Inventory &amp; biographical data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 2</td>
<td>Orlando C. Bowles – Correspondence</td>
<td>1856-1865</td>
<td>46 items</td>
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<td>Folder 3</td>
<td>Orlando C. Bowles – Correspondence</td>
<td>1866-1879</td>
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<td>Folder 4</td>
<td>Orlando C. Bowles – Correspondence</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Surveys</td>
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<td>Surveys</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Surveys</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Surveys</td>
<td>1851-1861</td>
<td>23 items</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Orlando C. Bowles – Civil War soldiers’ pay</td>
<td>1864-1869</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Orlando C. Bowles – Miscellaneous legal papers</td>
<td>1838-1880, n.d.</td>
<td>12 items</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Orlando C. Bowles – Accounts and receipts</td>
<td>1862-1892</td>
<td>19 items</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Orlando C. Bowles – Account books and notebooks</td>
<td>1841-1859</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>William and Colbert Cecil – Miscellaneous papers</td>
<td>1843-1869, n.d.</td>
<td>22 items</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Correspondence, accounts, receipts of third parties</td>
<td>1853-1878</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Miscellaneous printed matter</td>
<td>1860-1879, n.d.</td>
<td>8 items</td>
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</table>

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD**

MSS 455 BOWLES, Orlando Charles, 1825-1892

Correspondence, accounts, land surveys, and miscellaneous business and legal papers of Orlando C. Bowles, a Civil War veteran, lawyer, farmer, and timber trader of Pike County, Kentucky. Includes some material relating to the Cecil family of Floyd and Pike counties.

1 box. 15 folders. 320 items. Originals.

1943.18.1
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**SEE and SEE ALSO**

Rodgers, Cyrus M.
   See also:
      Rogers, Cyrus M.

Niedermeier/Jeffrey  04/23/2013