

CHAMBREAU PAPERS
EDWARD CHAMBREAU PAPERS
EDOUARD CHAMBREAU PAPERS
[THE WYNIFRED CHAMBREAU GRASLE COLLECTION]

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- Ownership:** The Library owns the Edward Chambreau Papers.
- Access:** The papers are unrestricted. Please consult Special Collections for further information.
- Size:** The Chambreau Papers consist of 7 manuscript boxes, 1 oversize book box, and 1 object box in 4 linear feet.
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Biography

Edward [Edouard] Chambreau was born on January 12, 1821, in the village of Froeshville, department of Moselle, France, to Dominic and Elisabeth (nee Boillo) Chambreau. His father, a tanner, was a "participant in the conventionist movement" which necessitated his fleeing to Germany. His wife emigrated to Montreal, Canada, with her 4-year old son in 1825, where they were joined by Dominic a year later. Edward attended and boarded at the Sisters School in Montreal.

Edward was a member of the Society of Patriots and, for activities in the Society, was arrested and imprisoned in Montreal, in December of 1837. Upon the intercession of Bishop Bourjettte, he was freed on New Year's Day, 1838.

His parents apprenticed him to a tailor, but Edward left Montreal to join the circus. He subsequently joined the Knights of the Tamborine and Bones and traveled with the minstrel group, the Aethiopian Minstrels, and later with the Sable Brothers. He returned home to Montreal at age 22, where his parents wanted him to marry. He left home instead and went "wherever his inclinations led him."

He enlisted as a General Service Man in the United States Army at the beginning of the Mexican War in 1846 and participated in various battles in California. He arrived in Oregon City, then known as "The Falls", on August 28, 1847. He was briefly employed at Fort Vancouver by the Hudson Bay Company, and, in 1849, went to California. Returning to Oregon, he lived for a while in the Tygh Valley, then moved to Portland where he ran a saloon and gambling joint. He married Barbara Ann McBee on December 13, 1852, in Forest Grove, Oregon. He fought in the early Indian Wars of the Pacific Northwest, prior to 1859, in Captain Kelley's Clark County Rangers regiment. He was converted to Christianity, reformed, and from 1876 to 1880 was General O.O. Howard's "scout"; that is, he visited Indian camps and reservations to find out whether trouble was brewing and to report the presence of trouble-makers.

In later life, Chambreau owned various trading posts, a variety theater, and a furniture store. He died in Portland, Oregon, in February, 1902, and was buried in the Rose City Cemetery.

Scope and Content

These papers include Edward Chambreau's personal diaries, manuscript autobiographical materials, his original reports to General O.O. Howard at Fort Vancouver, while employed as a scout, as well as various anecdotes of his scouting trips among the Northwest tribes, Chambreau family deeds, widow's pension records, transcripts of most of the original documents, the Chambreau/McBee Family Bible, a collection of his medals (Indian War Veteran, 1876 Centennial Hays Presidential Elections, etc.), and newspaper articles about Indian affairs and pioneers.

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