



The New York Public Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

George M. Chester letter regarding the New York City Orange Riot
1871
MssCol 22941

Compiled by Susan P. Waide, 2014

Summary

Creator: Chester, George M. (George Morell), 1838-1891

Title: George M. Chester letter regarding the New York City Orange Riot

Date: 1871

Size: .1 linear feet (1 folder)

Source: Purchased from Swann Galleries, 2014

Abstract: Letter (6 p.) from American newspaper journalist George M. Chester (1838-1891) to his mother, 1871 July 16, providing a vivid eyewitness account of the New York City Orange Riot of July 12. Chester was the son of John and Catherine M. Chester of Detroit, Michigan. He served in the Quartermaster's Department during the American Civil War and later worked for several years as a journalist in New York City. He describes the riot which broke out in Manhattan on July 12, 1871, when Irish-Catholic protesters confronted a parade of Irish Protestant Orangemen commemorating the Battle of the Boyne. The marchers were cordoned under the escort of New York City Police and five regiments of the New York National Guard (the 6th, 7th, 9th, 22nd, and 84th) when shooting broke out on Eighth Avenue near 24th Street, resulting in many injuries and deaths. Serving that day in the 22nd N.Y.N.G., Chester recounts the sequence of events from the start of the parade at Eighth Avenue and 29th Street to his muster-out at the Cooper Institute, and duty the following day. Three sets of line drawings show the strategic disposition of the marchers and their guards at various times, including the disorder following the shootings.

Preferred citation: George M. Chester letter regarding the New York City Orange Riot, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

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Key Terms

Subjects

Catholics -- New York (State) -- New York

Irish Americans -- New York (State) -- New York

Police -- New York (State) -- New York
Riots -- New York (State) -- New York

Occupations

Journalists
Police
Soldiers

Geographic Names

New York (N.Y.) -- Ethnic relations
New York (N.Y.) -- History -- 1865-1898

Names

Chester, Catherine M. -- recipient
Chester, George M. (George Morell), 1838-1891
New York (N.Y.). Police Dept
New York (State). National Guard
Orange Order