

**Collection #
M0628**

**EDMUND HENRY EITEL
FAMILY PAPERS, 1851–1920 (BULK 1913–1914)**

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

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15 February 1993

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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department

William Henry Smith Memorial Library

Indiana Historical Society

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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 document case
1 folder of photographs
1 OVA photograph folder
1 OVB Graphics folder

COLLECTION DATES: Inclusive 1851–1920; bulk 1913–1914

PROVENANCE: Jack McDonald, Indianapolis IN, 12 February 1992

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: James Whitcomb Riley and Harriet Eitel Wells Johnson (M0240)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1992.0229

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Edmund H. Eitel ([1887]–1960) was born in Indianapolis. His father was Henry Eitel and his mother was Elva Riley, sister of Hoosier poet James Whitcomb Riley. Eitel's uncle celebrated him in one poem as "The Knightly Rider of the Knee."

Eitel graduated from Shortridge High School in 1903, and earned a degree in mechanical engineering at Cornell University, where he was editor-in-chief of the *Cornell Daily Sun*.

Eitel worked for several years at the Union Trust Company in Indianapolis, but took some time off at the time of Riley's death in 1916 to act as his uncle's literary executor. He worked with Laurence Chambers at the Bobbs-Merrill Company to produce the standard biographical edition of Riley's works.

During World War I, Eitel was a lieutenant in the naval air force. He later built one of the first houses in the suburb of Golden Hill.

Sources:

Indiana Biographical Series, Vol. 56, pages 25 and 28

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection, filling one manuscript box, contains family correspondence 1856–1900 and correspondence and notes on the genealogy of the Riley family and some of its forebears, notably the Slick, Marine, Wilson, and Harvey families. The name Riley, though it sounds Irish, has Pennsylvania Dutch origins, as Ryland or Reylandt.

The genealogical material, in Folders 1–17, came from a thick loose-leaf notebook, prepared by Eitel about 1913 when he contemplated doing a book about his uncle's ancestry. Material has been kept in its original order, which follows a numerical series set up by Eitel on a chart in Folder 1.

Family letters and papers are in Folders 18–26. They mainly concern Reuben A. Riley, James Whitcomb's father, who was a lawyer with considerable property and a poetical bent. There are also a few letters addressed to the poet, dating from 1870 to 1900.

An early photograph portrait, probably of Reuben Riley, four later photograph portraits, probably of Henry Eitel, and a pen and ink drawing of Andrew Riley are stored in Visual Collections. There is also a photograph of a Marine family reunion in 1913, two photographs of the cemetery where Margaret Slick Riley is buried, and a photograph of "Joshua Swingley & wife who lived on Andrew Riley's farm in 1914.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Genealogical charts	Box 1, Folder 1
Correspondence with W. C. Bobbs about proposed genealogical book	Box 1, Folder 2
Reuben A. Riley	Box 1, Folder 3
Reuben A. Riley	Box 1, Folder 4
Reuben A. Riley, photostats of documents	Box 1, Folder 5
Notes regarding burial of Margaret Slick Riley from interview with Joshua Swingley in 1914	Box 1, Folder 6
Photographs of cemetery where Margaret Slick Riley is buried and photograph of "Joshua Swingley & wife who live on Andrew Riley's old farm 1914"	Photographs: Folder 1
James Ryland	Box 1, Folder 7
Reylandt family	Box 1, Folder 8
From John Slick Riley re: Ryland family	Box 1, Folder 9
Harvey family	Box 1, Folder 10
Slick family I	Box 1, Folder 11
Slick family II	Box 1, Folder 12
Wilson family	Box 1, Folder 13
Marine family	Box 1, Folder 14
Marine family reunion, Marion 1913 [photographic post card]	Photographs: Folder 1
From Philip Kabel—genealogical notes	Box 1, Folder 15
Laurine Taylor Keyser, "Mother's Memories of Grandfather's Memories of the Rileys Emigrating to the West"	Box 1, Folder 16

Historical notes transcribed to Eitel	Box 1, Folder 17
Deed to Phenton A. Riley, 1851	Box 1, Folder 18
Letter [Joseph A. Riley?], 1861	Box 1, Folder 19
Letters from Reuben A. Riley, 1856–1870	Box 1, Folder 20
Reuben A. Riley, drawings	Box 1, Folder 21
[Reuben A. Riley?] essay "Is Death Dreadful?"	Box 1, Folder 22
Letters to James Whitcomb Riley 1870–1900	Box 1, Folder 23
Carbon copies of poems Greenfield 1880 [JWR?]	Box 1, Folder 24
John Riley and Elva Riley Eitel, letters 1872–1893	Box 1, Folder 25
Poem "The Nativity" by E. N. Richards	Box 1, Folder 26
[Edmund Henry Eitel]	Photographs: Folder 1
[Ruben Riley?]	OVA Photographs: Folder 1
Drawing of Andrew Riley	OVB Graphics: Folder 1

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M0628).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.