

# Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the  
Library of Congress

Prepared by Patrick Kerwin



Manuscript Division, Library of  
Congress

Washington, D.C.

2000

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# Collection Summary

Title: Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough Papers

Span Dates: 1797-1874

ID No.: MSS23044

Creator: Goldsborough, Louis Malesherbes, 1805-1877

Extent: 8,000 items; 27 containers plus 1 oversize; 7.2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Naval officer. Correspondence, military records, financial papers, printed material, illustrations, and other papers concerning Goldsborough's career in the United States Navy.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### Personal Names

Barron, James, 1769-1851--Correspondence.  
Black, Jeremiah S. (Jeremiah Sullivan), 1810-1883--Correspondence.  
Burnside, Ambrose Everett, 1824-1881.  
Cabell, J. L. (James Lawrence), 1813-1889--Correspondence.  
Chase, Salmon P. (Salmon Portland), 1808-1873--Correspondence.  
Crittenden, John J. (John Jordan), 1787-1863--Correspondence.  
Decatur, Stephen, 1779-1820--Correspondence.  
Du Pont, Samuel Francis, 1803-1865--Correspondence.  
Everett, Edward, 1794-1865--Correspondence.  
Fox, Gustavus Vasa, 1821-1883--Correspondence.  
Goldsborough, Louis Malesherbes, 1805-1877.  
Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865.  
Motley, John Lothrop, 1814-1877--Correspondence.  
Smith, Joseph, 1790-1877--Correspondence.  
Surratt, John H. (John Harrison), 1844-1916.  
Tatnall, Josiah, 1795-1871--Correspondence.  
Upshur, A. P. (Abel Parker), 1790-1844--Correspondence.  
Welles, Gideon, 1802-1878--Correspondence.  
Wilkes, Charles, 1798-1877--Correspondence.

### Organizations

Castillo de San Juan de Ulúa (Mexico)  
Merrimack (Frigate)  
Minnesota (Frigate)  
United States Naval Academy.

### Subjects

Cabinet officers.  
Dueling.  
Hampton Roads, Battle of, Va., 1862.  
Mexican War, 1846-1848.

### Locations

Charleston (S.C.)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Charleston Harbor (S.C.)  
James River (Va.)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

North Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Roanoke Island (N.C.)--History--Capture, 1862.  
South Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Blockades.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Naval operations.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Virginia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Occupations  
Naval officers.

## Administrative Information

### Provenance:

The papers of Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough were purchased by the Library of Congress in 1917.

### Other Repositories:

Other collections of Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough material are in the New York Public Library, New York, N.Y., and the Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

### Copyright Status:

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

### Access and Restrictions

The papers of Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

### Microfilm:

Selected documents relating to the Civil War have been included in *A People At War*, a microfilm edition issued by Chadwyck-Healy, 1989-1990.

### Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

| <i>Date</i>  | <i>Event</i>  |
|--------------|---|
| 1805, Feb. 5 | Born, Washington, D.C.                              |
| 1812         | Received a midshipman's warrant, United States Navy |
| 1816         | Began service as a midshipman, United States Navy   |
| 1823-1824    | Acting lieutenant, United States Navy               |

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 1825          | Commissioned lieutenant   |
| 1827-1829     | Served in the Mediterranean in command of four ships  |
| 1830          | Given charge of the newly created Depot of Charts and Instruments (of which he was the originator), Washington, D.C.  |
| 1831          | Married Elizabeth Gamble Wirt   |
| 1833          | Commanded mounted volunteers in Seminole War  |
| 1841          | Promoted to commander   |
| 1843-1846     | Stationed at Portsmouth, N.H.   |
| 1845          | Published <i>A Reply by L. M. Goldsborough to an Attack Made upon the Navy of the United States by Samuel E. Coures, President of the Peace Society.</i> Portsmouth, N.H.: C. W. Brewster |
| 1848          | Published, <i>Letter to John Y. Mason, Secretary of the Navy, Concerning the Assignment of Rank to Medical Officers and Pursers.</i> Washington, D.C.                                     |
| 1849-1850     | Senior naval member of a commission which explored California and Oregon  |
| 1853-1857     | Superintendent, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.   |
| 1855          | Promoted to captain   |
| 1859-1861     | Commanded Brazil Squadron   |
| 1861          | Took command of Atlantic Blockading Squadron  |
| 1862          | Promoted to rear admiral  |
| 1862          | Cooperated with Union General Ambrose Burnside in capture of Roanoke Island, N.C.   |
| 1862-1865     | Performed administrative duties, Washington, D.C.   |
| 1865          | Took charge of European Squadron  |
| 1868          | Stationed in Washington, D.C.   |
| 1873          | Retired from United States Navy   |
| 1877, Feb. 20 | Died, Washington, D.C.  |

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough (1805-1877) span the years 1797-1874 and include correspondence, military records, financial papers, printed material, illustrations, and other material relating to his career in the United States Navy.

The collection is organized in five series: [Correspondence and Other Papers](#), [Letterbooks](#), [Military Papers](#), [Miscellany](#), and [Oversize](#). Included is an account of the capture of Castillo de San Juan De Ulúa during the Mexican War in 1847, the capture of John H. Surratt, and Goldsborough's work as superintendent of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, 1853-1857. Also included are items from the Civil War relating to the blockade of Charleston Harbor, General Ambrose Everett Burnside's Roanoke Island expedition, operations on the James River, Goldsborough's command of the *Minnesota* in Hampton Roads, Virginia, while awaiting an expected second attack of the *Merrimack*, the scuttling of the *Merrimack*, and visits to the front lines by Abraham Lincoln and members of his cabinet. A draft of a letter from Stephen Decatur to James Barron which led to a challenge and duel is also included.

Correspondents include Jeremiah S. Black, J. L. Cabell, Salmon P. Chase, John J. Crittenden, Samuel Francis Du Pont, Edward Everett, Gustavus Vasa Fox, John Lothrop Motley, Joseph Smith, Josiah Tatnall, A. P. Upshur, Gideon Welles, and Charles Wilkes

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in five series:

- [Correspondence and Other Papers, 1797-1874](#)
- [Letterbooks, 1853-1867](#)
- [Military Papers, 1852-1870](#)
- [Miscellany, 1836-1871](#)
- [Oversize, 1861-1869](#)

## Description of Series

| <i>Container</i> | <i>Series</i>  |
|------------------|--|
| BOX 1-24         | <u>Correspondence and Other Papers, 1797-1874</u><br>Correspondence and other material.<br>Arranged by bound and unbound material and chronologically therein.                               |
| BOX 24           | <u>Letterbooks, 1853-1867</u><br>Letterbooks.<br>Arranged chronologically.   |
| BOX 25           | <u>Military Papers, 1852-1870</u><br>General orders, circulars, courts martial, and other material.<br>Arranged by bound and unbound material and chronologically therein.                   |
| BOX 26-27        | <u>Miscellany, 1836-1871</u><br>Bills, circulars, notes, notebooks, journals, illustrations, and other material.<br>Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein. |
| BOX OV 1         | <u>Oversize, 1861-1869</u><br>Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.   |

# Container List

| <i>Container</i> | <i>Contents</i>   |
|------------------|---|
| BOX 1-24         | Correspondence and Other Papers, 1797-1874<br>Correspondence and other material.<br>Arranged by bound and unbound material and chronologically therein. |
| BOX 1            | Unbound   |
| BOX 1            | 1797; 1817, Jan. 1-1831, Oct. 26  |
| BOX 2            | 1831, Oct. 28-1834, June 24   |
| BOX 3            | 1834, June 28-1837, Sept. 15  |
| BOX 4            | 1837, Oct. 27-1841, Apr. 23   |
| BOX 5            | 1841, Apr. 29-1847, Feb. 2  |
| BOX 6            | 1847, Feb. 18-1852, May 15  |
| BOX 7            | 1852, May 17-1856, Aug. 21  |
| BOX 8            | 1856, Aug. 22-1859, Oct. 21   |
| BOX 9            | 1859, Oct. 22-1861, Feb. 5  |
| BOX 10           | 1861, Feb. 6-Nov. 7   |
| BOX 11           | 1861, Nov. 8-1862, July 13  |
| BOX 12           | 1862, July 15-1863, Sept. 16  |
| BOX 13           | 1863, Sept. 17-1865, May 28   |
| BOX 14           | 1865, May 29-Dec. 19  |
| BOX 15           | 1865, Dec. 20-1866, June 15   |
| BOX 16           | 1866, June 16-Nov. 24   |
| BOX 17           | Bound   |
| BOX 17           | 1866, Nov. 25-1867, Apr. 14   |
| BOX 18           | 1867, Apr. 15-1869, May 14  |
| BOX 19           | 1869, May 15-1874, Dec. 15  |
| BOX 20           | Undated<br>(1 vol.)   |
| BOX 21           | (1 vol.)  |
| BOX 22           | (1 vol.)  |
| BOX 23           | (1 vol.)  |
| BOX 24           | Unbound   |
| BOX 24           | 1862, Feb. 23-Mar. 20   |
| BOX 24           | Letterbooks, 1853-1867<br>Letterbooks.<br>Arranged chronologically.   |
| BOX 24           | 1853, Nov. 1-1857, Sept. 15<br>(2 vols.)  |
| BOX 24           | 1866, Feb. 6-1867, July 14  |
| BOX 25           | Military Papers, 1852-1870<br>General orders, circulars, courts martial, and other material.  |

## Military Papers, 1852-1870

### *Container*

### *Contents*

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Arranged by bound and unbound material and chronologically therein.

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| BOX 25    | Bound, 1863-1866<br>(2 vols.)   |
| BOX 25    | Unbound, 1852, 1859, 1862-1870  |
| BOX 26-27 | Miscellany, 1836-1871<br>Bills, circulars, notes, notebooks, journals, illustrations, and other material.<br>Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein. |
| BOX 25    | Bills, 1836-1869, undated   |
| BOX 25    | (1 folder)  |
| BOX 26    | (2 folders)   |
| BOX 26    | Circulars, 1862-1865  |
| BOX 26    | "Continuation of the Internal Rules on Board the Vessels of the Fleet,"<br>undated  |
| BOX 26    | Illustrations, 1841-1871  |
| BOX 26    | Journal of the Board to Examine Steam Machinery Afloat, 1869  |
| BOX 27    | Notebook, 1843-1846, undated  |
| BOX 27    | Printed matter, 1852-1869, undated<br>(3 folders) <i><u>See also Oversize</u></i>   |
| BOX 27    | Rigging, 1843   |
| BOX OV 1  | Oversize, 1861-1869<br>Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders<br>from which the items were removed.  |
| BOX OV 1  | Miscellany  |
| BOX OV 1  | Printed matter, 1861, 1869, undated (Container 27)  |