

Colby Mitchell Chester Papers

A Finding Aid to the Papers in the Naval
Historical Foundation Collection in the
Library of Congress

Prepared by Ruth S. Nicholson



Manuscript Division, Library of
Congress

Washington, D.C.

2010

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

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Collection Summary

Title: Colby Mitchell Chester Papers

Span Dates: 1913-1928

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1913-1917)

ID No.: MSS78410

Creator: Chester, Colby Mitchell, 1844-1932

Extent: 300 items; 1 container; 0.4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Abstract: Naval officer. Correspondence, research notes, and unpublished manuscripts relating to Chester's study of Commodore Dudley Saltonstall and the Penobscot Bay Expedition in 1779.

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.

People

Chester, Colby Mitchell, 1844-1932.

Saltonstall, Dudley, 1738-1796.

Subjects

Penobscot Expedition, 1779.

Places

Penobscot Bay (Me.)--Discovery and exploration.

United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Campaigns.

Occupations

Naval officers.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Colby Mitchell Chester, naval officer, were deposited in the Library of Congress in 1964 by the Naval Historical Foundation and converted to a gift in 1998.

Processing History

The papers of Colby Chester Mitchell were arranged and described in 1973. The finding aid was revised in 2010.

Additional Guides

The Colby Mitchell Chester Papers are described in *Colby Mitchell Chester, William Freeland Fullam, Samuel McGowan, Henry Croskey Mustin: A Register of Their Papers in the Library of Congress*. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1973.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Colby Mitchell Chester is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Colby Mitchell Chester 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.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Colby Mitchell Chester Papers, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1844, Feb. 29	Born, New London, Conn.
1863	Graduated, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1864	Duty in <i>Richmond</i> (steam sloop of war), West Gulf Blockading Squadron
1865	Duty in <i>Kickapoo</i> (monitor)
1869-1873	Duty in <i>Alaska</i> (screw sloop of war), Pacific Squadron
1873	Married Melancia Antoinette Tremaine
1874-1877	Duty at United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1885-1888	Commanded <i>Galena</i> (steamer)
1889	Served on Naval Board to select naval site on the Pacific coast, Puget Sound Navy Yard, Wash.
1891-1894	Commandant of midshipmen at United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1896	Commanded <i>Richmond</i> (steam sloop of war)
1897-1898	Commander in chief, South Atlantic Squadron
1900	Duty in Constantinople to support an American damage claim
1902-1906	Superintendent, United States Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C.
1903	Promoted to rear admiral
1908	Authorized by President Theodore Roosevelt and the State Department to aid in the establishment of American trade in western Asia
1908-1909	Delegate to the Ninth International Congress of Geography, Geneva, Switzerland
1917	Commandant of the Naval Unit, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

1932, May 4 Died, Rye, N.Y.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Colby Mitchell Chester (1844-1932) span the years 1913-1928, with the bulk of the material dating from 1913 to 1917. The papers are arranged in two series: [Correspondence](#) and [Book File](#).

The collection is devoted primarily to research, correspondence, and unpublished manuscripts concerning Dudley Saltonstall (1738-1796) and the Penobscot Bay Expedition. Saltonstall was the American naval commodore who led an ill-fated attempt to recapture Bagaduce (now Castine) in Penobscot Bay from the British in 1779. Commanding nineteen vessels outfitted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Saltonstall failed to move against the three British sloops of war in the bay while he still outnumbered them, and, upon the arrival of the British fleet, fled the area. After two of his ships were captured and the others were destroyed to prevent capture, Saltonstall was dismissed from the navy. In preparing the manuscripts, Chester was writing a critical analysis of the expedition and a defense of Saltonstall.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in two series:

- [Correspondence, 1913-1928](#)
- [Book File, 1917](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1	<u>Correspondence, 1913-1928</u> Primarily incoming letters to Chester. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	<u>Book File, 1917</u> Typescripts and notes. Arranged chronologically.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Correspondence, 1913-1928 Primarily incoming letters to Chester. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	1913
BOX 1	25 June, Gardner Weld Allen to Chester
BOX 1	27 June, Richard M. Saltonstall to Chester
BOX 1	24 Aug., Charles W. Noyes to Chester
BOX 1	29 Aug., Charles W. Stewart to Chester
BOX 1	12 Sept., Magnus S. Thompson to Chester
BOX 1	1914
BOX 1	20 Nov., Otto H. Tittmann to Chester
BOX 1	30 Nov., Otto H. Tittmann to Chester
BOX 1	1928
BOX 1	8 May, Chester to Dudley W. Knox
BOX 1	Book File, 1917 Typescripts and notes. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	"Commodore Dudley Saltonstall, the Continental Navy, and the Defeat of the Penobscot Bay Expedition in 1779"
BOX 1	Unpublished typescript with a chart of Penobscot Bay, 1917
BOX 1	Unpublished typescript with a chart of Penobscot Bay, undated
BOX 1	Carbon copy of typescript with illustrations of Penobscot Bay, undated
BOX 1	Notes relating to Saltonstall and the Penobscot Bay expedition, undated