John Shaw Papers

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

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2011

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

Additional search options available at:
http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms011181

LC Online Catalog record:
http://lccn.loc.gov/mm70053009

Prepared by Ruth S. Nicholson
Collection Summary
Title: John Shaw Papers
Span Dates: 1798-1895
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1810-1822)
ID No.: MSS53009
Creator: Shaw, John, 1773-1823
Extent: 1,200 items ; 4 containers ; 2 linear feet ; 1 microfilm reel
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Summary: Naval officer. Correspondence, journal, notebooks, reports, biographical data, and other papers relating primarily to Shaw's command of the New Orleans Naval Station and the Boston Navy Yard.

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
Angus, Samuel, 1784-1840--Correspondence.
Bainbridge, William, 1774-1833--Correspondence.
Biddle, James, 1783-1848--Correspondence.
Binney, Amos, 1778-1833--Correspondence.
Chauncey, Isaac, 1772-1840--Correspondence.
Denison, Henry, 1782-1822--Correspondence.
Elliott, Jesse D. (Jesse Duncan), 1782-1845--Correspondence.
Fillebrown, Thomas Scott, 1834-1884--Correspondence.
Goldsborough, Charles W. (Charles Washington), 1779-1843--Correspondence.
Green, Moses--Correspondence.
Green, Moses--Correspondence.
Hambleton, Samuel, 1777-1851--Correspondence.
Hull, Isaac, 1773-1843--Correspondence.
Macdonough, Thomas, 1783-1825--Correspondence.
Murray, Alexander, 1754 or 1755-1821--Correspondence.
Porter, David, 1780-1843--Correspondence.
Renshaw, James--Correspondence.
Rodgers, John, 1773-1838--Correspondence.
Shaw, John, 1773-1823.
Shaw, Joseph B.--Correspondence.
Thomas, Benjamin--Correspondence.
Thompson, Smith, 1768-1843--Correspondence.
Wise, George A.--Correspondence.

Organizations
Boston Navy Yard (Boston, Mass.)

Subjects
Fortification--Louisiana--New Orleans.
Navy-yards and naval stations--Massachusetts--Boston.

Places
Alabama--History--War of 1812.
Louisiana--History--War of 1812.
Mobile (Ala.)--History.
New Orleans (La.)--History.
United States--History--War of 1812.

Occupations
Naval officers.

Administrative Information

Provenance
The papers of John Shaw, naval officer, were deposited in the Library of Congress by the Naval Historical Foundation in 1949-1950 and converted to a gift in 1998.

Processing History
The papers of John Shaw were arranged and described in 1970. The letterbooks were microfilmed in 1992. The finding aid was revised in 2011.

Additional Guides

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

Access and Restrictions
The papers of John Shaw 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
A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on one reel. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition as available.

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

Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1773</td>
<td>Born, Mountmellick, Queen's County, Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>Emigrated to New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>Duty in SS Sampson, East Indies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Duty in SS Sampson, East Indies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>Served in the Macpherson Blues, a volunteer military organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1795  Third officer, SS *Hero*, East Indies
1796  First officer, SS *George and Patty Washington*, East Indies
1798  Married Elizabeth Palmer (died 1814)
     Appointed lieutenant, U.S. Navy; duty in USS *Montezuma*, West Indies Squadron
1799  Commanded USS *Enterprise*, West Indies Squadron
1801  Commanded USS *George Washington*, Mediterranean Squadron
1805  Commanded USS *John Adams*, Mediterranean Squadron
1806  Duty at New Orleans Station
1807  Promoted to captain
1808  Commanded Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.
1810  Commanded New Orleans Station
1814  Commanded Atlantic Naval Squadron
1815  Commanded Mediterranean Squadron
1819  Commanded Navy Yard, Boston, Mass.
1820  Married Mary Breed
1822  Court-martialed for unofficer-like conduct; returned to duty after six months

**Scope and Content Note**

The papers of John Shaw (1773-1823) span the years 1798-1895, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1810-1822. Concerned principally with Shaw's command of the New Orleans Station, 1810-1813, and the Boston Navy Yard, 1819-1823, the papers consist of a journal, official and private letterbooks, correspondence, notebooks, reports, a biographical file, and miscellany.

Shaw's letterbooks contain detailed reports to the secretary of the navy concerning the fortification of New Orleans during the War of 1812 and the capture of Mobile. Together with the general correspondence, the letterbooks also relate to Shaw's duties as commandant of the Boston Navy Yard and to his court-martial in 1822.

Correspondents include Samuel Angus, William Bainbridge, James Biddle, Amos Binney, Isaac Chauncey, Henry Denison, Jesse D. Elliott, Thomas Scott Fillebrown, Charles W. Goldsborough, Moses Green, Samuel Hambleton, Isaac Hull, Thomas Macdonough, Alexander Murray, David Porter, James Renshaw, John Rodgers, Joseph B. Shaw, Benjamin Thomas, Smith Thompson, and George A. Wise.
Arrangement of the Papers

The collection is organized by type of material.
## Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1</td>
<td>Correspondence, journal, and letterbooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1</td>
<td>1798-1821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(18 folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 2</td>
<td>1822-1845, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7 folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 2</td>
<td>Journal, USF United States, 1815, and USF Constellation, 1817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 2</td>
<td>Letterbooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 20,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 2</td>
<td>To secretary of the navy, 1819-1823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 2</td>
<td>USS Independence, 1821-1822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 2</td>
<td>Private, 1819-1822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 3</td>
<td>New Orleans Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 3</td>
<td>1810-1812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 3</td>
<td>1812-1813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Miscellany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Biographical file, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Filing boards, 1819-1823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2 folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Handwritten signal book, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Letter patent for improvement in the mode of hanging rudders, 1818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Memoir of Shaw, by Lieutenant Henry Ward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Newspaper clippings (fragments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Notebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Accounts, 1817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>List of midshipmen and accounts, 1818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Memoranda of Shaw's court-martial, 1822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Printed matter, 1814-1823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Receipts, 1819-1866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Report, court of inquiry on the desertion of John W. Mitchel, 1816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Report, and investigation of the murder of Sharp D. Moore, 1816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Signal book, undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>