Collection Summary
Title: Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
Inclusive Dates: 1825-1960
Bulk Dates: 1830-1880
ID No.: MSS31682
Creator: Maury, Matthew Fontaine, 1806-1873
Extent: 14,650 items
Extent: 64 containers plus 2 oversize
Extent: 17.5 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm79031682
Summary: Naval officer and oceanographer. Correspondence, letterbooks, diaries, journals, speeches, articles, and other writings, notebooks, electrical experiment book, charts, and printed material relating chiefly to Maury's naval career, scientific activities and interests, service as a Confederate agent in England, and work as an immigration official for Southern expatriates in Mexico, and to the Maury (Morey) family.
Online Content: The papers of Matthew Fontaine Maury are available on the Library of Congress website at https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/collmss.ms000110. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the online edition.

Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People
Blackford, William M., 1801-1864--Correspondence.
Coblentz, Catherine Cate, 1897-1951. Matthew Fontaine Maury biography. 1953.
Corbin, Nannie, 1837-1900--Correspondence.
Corbin, Wellford, 1835-1897--Correspondence.
Hasbrouck, William C., 1800-1870--Correspondence.
Holmes, Nathaniel J., approximately 1821--Correspondence.
Jansen, Marin H. (Marin Henry), 1817-1893--Correspondence.
Maury family--Correspondence.
Maury, Ann, 1803-1876--Correspondence.
Maury, Ann, 1811-1901--Correspondence.
Maury, Matthew Fontaine, 1806-1873.
Maury, Matthew Fontaine, 1849-1886--Correspondence.
Maury, Richard L. (Richard Lancelot), 1840-1907--Correspondence.
Maury, Rutson, 1805-1882--Correspondence.
Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, 1832-1867--Correspondence.
Minor, Franklin, 1812-1867--Correspondence.
Otey, James Hervey, 1800-1863--Correspondence.
Smith, C. Alphonso (Charles Alphonso), 1864-1924. C. Alphonso Smith papers. 1864-1927.
Smith, Francis H. (Francis Henney), 1812-1890--Correspondence.
Tremlett, F. W. (Francis William), 1821-1913--Correspondence.
Werth, Mary, 1844-1928--Correspondence.
Withers, Eliza, 1846-1881--Correspondence.

Organizations
United States Naval Observatory.
United States. Depot of Charts and Instruments.

Subjects
American Confederate voluntary exiles--Mexico.
Diplomatic and consular service, Confederate--Great Britain.
Meteorology.
Mines and mineral resources.
Oceanography.
Physical geography--Virginia.
Science--History--19th century.
Torpedoes.

Places
Confederate States of America--Foreign relations--Great Britain.
Confederate States of America--History, Naval.
Great Britain--Foreign relations--Confederate States of America.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Naval operations.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Refugees.

Titles
Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers at the Library of Congress

Occupations
Naval officers, Confederate.
Naval officers.
Oceanographers.

Acquisition Information
The papers and medals of Matthew Fontaine Maury, naval officer and oceanographer, were given to the United States by Maury's daughter, Mary Maury Werth, and other Maury descendants in 1912 in a presentation to President William Howard Taft. The medals were placed in the Smithsonian Institution and the papers in the Library of Congress later that year. The Library acquired additional Maury papers through gifts from the Maury family and others and by purchase, 1913-1996.

Processing History
The papers of Matthew Fontaine Maury were first arranged and described by Manuscript Division staff in 1962. Additional material was incorporated into the collection by Manuscript Division staff in 1978 and by Karen Linn Femia in 1997.

Transfers
Maps have been transferred to the Library's Geography and Map Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

Copyright Status
The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Matthew Fontaine Maury is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).
Access and Restrictions

The papers of Matthew Fontaine Maury 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.

Online Content

The papers of Matthew Fontaine Maury are available on the Library of Congress website at https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/collmss.ms000110. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the online edition.

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1806, Jan. 14</td>
<td>Born near Fredericksburg, Va.; raised in Tennessee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1818</td>
<td>Entered Harpeth Academy, near Franklin, Tenn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825-1834</td>
<td>Obtained midshipman's warrant, U.S. Navy and made three extended voyages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>Married Ann Hull Herndon; resided in Fredericksburg, Va.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>Promoted to lieutenant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Published A New Theoretical and Practical Treatise on Navigation (Philadelphia: Key and Biddle. 174 pp.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Permanently lamed in stagecoach accident and thenceforth not assigned to sea duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842-1844</td>
<td>Superintendent of the Navy Department's Depot of Charts and Instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844-1861</td>
<td>Superintendent of the Naval Observatory and Hydrographical Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>Issued first Wind and Current Charts (U.S. Hydrographical Office) showing best &quot;tracks&quot; for sailing ships in the North Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>U.S. representative at international maritime congress, Brussels, Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>Published The Physical Geography of the Sea (New York: Harper &amp; Bros. 274 pp.), the first modern oceanographic textbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Placed on inactive duty by the U.S. Navy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>Restored to active duty by presidential order; promoted to commander retroactive to 1855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861, Apr. 20</td>
<td>Resigned from U.S. Navy and accepted commission as commander in Confederate Navy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>Special agent of the Confederate government to England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865-1866</td>
<td>Imperial commissioner of immigration to the Emperor of Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866-1868</td>
<td>Resided in England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Published First Lessons in Geography (New York: Richardson &amp; Co. 62 pp.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Published The World We Live in (New York: Richardson &amp; Co. 104 pp.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868-1872</td>
<td>Professor of meteorology, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Va.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>Published Manual of Geography (New York: University Publishing Co. 162 pp.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873, Feb. 1</td>
<td>Died, Lexington, Va.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scope and Content Note

The papers of Matthew Fontaine Maury (1806-1873) span the years 1825-1960, with the bulk of the material dating from the 1830s to the 1870s. The papers consist of letterbooks, correspondence, diaries, notebooks, electrical experiment book, journals, drafts and printed copies of speeches and articles, charts, related printed matter, and proofs of his unpublished work "Astronomy." The papers are organized into the following series: General Correspondence, Writings, Addresses, and Lectures, Letterbooks, Miscellany, Additions and Oversize.

The papers pertain chiefly to Maury's naval career, his scientific activities and interests, and his service to the Confederacy in the Civil War. There is also considerable material concerning the many medals and honors conferred upon him for his scientific contributions. Some subjects touched upon are mines, meteorology, the colonization of Mexico by former Confederates, physical geography of Virginia, and oceanography. Much of the correspondence is family correspondence, including many of Maury's own letters.

Prominent among his correspondents are William M. Blackford, William C. Hasbrouck, Nathaniel J. Holmes, Admiral Marin H. Jansen, Privy Councilor to the King of Holland, Ann Hull Herndon Maury, Richard L. Maury, Rutson Maury, Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, Franklin Minor, James Hervey Otey, Francis Henney Smith, Francis W. Tremlett, and Mary Herndon Maury Werth.

Placed with the collection are papers of Charles Alphonso Smith regarding Maury including clippings and notes on Maury as well as correspondence with Mary Maury (Mrs. James R.) Werth concerning her father. Also included is a typescript of a life of Maury by Catherine Cate Coblentz.

The 1978 addition to the Maury Papers consists of correspondence between various Maury family members, 1858-1878. These papers were received by the Library between 1966 and 1975. Correspondents include Nannie Corbin, Wellford Corbin, Matthew Fontaine Maury (1849-1886), Mary Herndon Maury Werth, and Eliza Hull Maury Withers. Of particular interest are the letters Maury received during the periods when he was special Confederate agent to Great Britain in London and an immigration official for Southern expatriates in Mexico.

The 1997 addition consists of Maury papers received by the Library from 1989 to 1996. It primarily contains letters written by Matthew F. Maury to his cousin, Ann Maury, relating his daily activities. Also included are correspondence with other family members, one letter of 1858 to Benjamin Silliman concerning expeditions and packet ships, news clippings (some dating from the mid-twentieth century), and copies of navigational charts.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in six series:

- General Correspondence, 1825-1910
- Writings, Addresses, and Lectures, 1856-1872
- Letterbooks, 1859-1891
- Miscellany, 1836-1953
- Additions, 1831-1960
- Oversize, 1855-1873
## Description of Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Series</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1-46</td>
<td><strong>General Correspondence, 1825-1910</strong></td>
<td>Correspondence. Arranged chronologically in forty-six bound volumes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 47-51</td>
<td><strong>Writings, Addresses, and Lectures, 1856-1872</strong></td>
<td>Arranged chronologically in five bound volumes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 52-56</td>
<td><strong>Letterbooks, 1859-1891</strong></td>
<td>Copies of outgoing correspondence. Arranged chronologically in five bound volumes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 57-63</td>
<td><strong>Miscellany, 1836-1953</strong></td>
<td>Account books, diaries, photographs, printed matter, scrapbook, writings, and C. Alphonso Smith papers re Maury. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 64</td>
<td><strong>Additions, 1831-1960</strong></td>
<td>Correspondence and family correspondence, each arranged chronologically. Miscellaneous material including genealogical records and news clippings. Arranged in two additions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX OV 1-OV 2</td>
<td><strong>Oversize, 1855-1873</strong></td>
<td>Diplomas, awards, and probate papers. Organized and described according to the series, folders, and boxes from which the items were removed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 1-46  | **General Correspondence, 1825-1910**  
Correspondence.  
Arranged chronologically in forty-six bound volumes. |
| BOX 1     | 1825, Feb. 6-1839, Nov.3  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 2     | 1839, Nov. 6-1843, July 15  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 3     | 29 July 1843-13 Feb. 1850  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 4     | 1850, Feb. 15-1855, Sept. 17  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 5     | 1855, Sept. 18-1856, Feb. 4  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 6     | 1856, Feb. 5-1857, Feb. 25  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 7     | 1857, Feb. 26-1859, June 6  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 8     | 7 June 1859-23 Jan. 1860  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 9     | 29 Jan.-21 Oct. 1860  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 10    | 22 Oct. 1860-21 Jan. 1861  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 11    | 22 Jan.-4 Feb. 1861  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 12    | 5-22 Feb. 1861  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 13    | 23 Feb.-6 Apr. 1861  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 14    | 7 Apr.-7 Oct. 1861  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 15    | 8 Oct. 1861-3 May 1862  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 16    | 4 May-17 Sept. 1862  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 17    | 18 Sept. 1862-20 Apr. 1863  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 18    | 21 Apr.-2 Nov. 1863  
**Digital content available** |
| BOX 19    | 3 Nov. 1863-5 Feb. 1864  
**Digital content available** |
### General Correspondence, 1825-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 20</td>
<td>6 Feb.-19 Oct. 1864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 21</td>
<td>20 Oct. 1864-8 June 1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 22</td>
<td>9 June-20 Aug. 1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 23</td>
<td>21 Aug.-1 Dec. 1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 24</td>
<td>3 Dec. 1865-18 Apr. 1866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 25</td>
<td>19 Apr. 1866-10 May 1867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 26</td>
<td>11 May 1867-9 June 1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 27</td>
<td>10 June-27 Nov. 1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 28</td>
<td>28 Nov. 1868-2 Feb. 1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 29</td>
<td>3 Feb.-10 Mar. 1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 30</td>
<td>11 Mar.-22 Apr. 1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 31</td>
<td>23 Apr.-25 June 1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 32</td>
<td>26 June-1 Nov. 1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 33</td>
<td>2 Nov. 1869-17 Jan. 1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 34</td>
<td>18 Jan.-29 Apr. 1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 35</td>
<td>30 Apr.-4 Aug. 1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 36</td>
<td>5 Aug. 1870-10 Apr. 1871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 37</td>
<td>11 Apr.-3 Sept. 1871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 38</td>
<td>9 Sept. 1871-1 Jan. 1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 39</td>
<td>2 Jan.-27 Mar. 1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 40</td>
<td>28 Mar.-10 Aug. 1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 41</td>
<td>11 Aug. 1872-3 Jan. 1873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 42</td>
<td>4-30 Jan. 1873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 43</td>
<td>1 Feb.-20 Mar. 1873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Container</td>
<td>Contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| BOX 44 | 21 Mar.-27 Oct. 1873  
Digital content available |
| BOX 45 | 28 Oct. 1873-8 Feb. 1895  
Digital content available |
| BOX 46 | 13 Apr. 1895-25 Apr. 1910, undated  
Digital content available |
| BOX 47-51 | **Writings, Addresses, and Lectures, 1856-1872**  
Arranged chronologically in five bound volumes. |
| BOX 47 | June 1856-June 1868  
Digital content available |
| BOX 48 | Dec. 1869-Jan. 1871  
Digital content available |
| BOX 49 | May 1871  
Digital content available |
| BOX 50 | May-Dec. 1871  
Digital content available |
| BOX 51 | Jan.-May 1872  
Digital content available |
| BOX 52-56 | **Letterbooks, 1859-1891**  
Copies of outgoing correspondence.  
Arranged chronologically in five bound volumes. |
| BOX 52 | 3 Dec. 1859-18 Jan. 1861  
Digital content available |
| BOX 53 | 9 Oct. 1868-28 Sept. 1869  
Digital content available |
| BOX 54 | 29 Sept.-9 Oct. 1869  
Digital content available |
| BOX 55 | 4 Apr. 1871-19 Mar. 1872  
Digital content available |
| BOX 56 | 12 Apr.-14 Nov. 1872, Fragments, 1891  
Digital content available |
| BOX 57-63 | **Miscellany, 1836-1953**  
Account books, diaries, photographs, printed matter, scrapbook, writings, and C. Alphonso Smith papers re Maury.  
Arranged alphabetically by type of material. |
| BOX 57 | Account books, 1841-1872  
Digital content available |
| | Architectural drawing of Lee Memorial Episcopal Church, Washington & Lee University, Lexington, Va., undated  
Digital content available |
| | "Children's recollections," 1872-1873, 1928  
Digital content available |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 58</td>
<td>Diaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1864-1865, 1866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1865-1866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1866-1869, 1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 59</td>
<td>Diplomas and awards, 1854-1858, undated See also Oversize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 60</td>
<td>Newspaper clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>circa 1860s-1870s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>circa 1880s-1900s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coblentz, Catherine Cate, "Naval Lieutenant Matthew Fontaine Maury, First Citizen of the World, 1853-1953," 1953

Digital content available

See also Oversize

Digital content available
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|           | Newspapers  
circa 1860s-1870s  
Digital content available  
circa 1880s-1890s  
Digital content available |
| BOX 61    | Periodicals, 1836-1897  
Digital content available |
|           | Probate, 1873  
See also Oversize  
Digital content available |
|           | Scrapbook, 1839-1873  
Digital content available |
|           | Smith, Alphonso C., collection  
Correspondence  
General, 1864-1868, 1889, undated  
Digital content available  
Regarding Maury, 1864-1867, 1923-1927, undated  
Digital content available  
Newspaper clippings, 1922-1924  
Digital content available  
Photographs, undated  
Digital content available |
| BOX 62    | Writings about Maury  
1903-1923  
Digital content available  
1924, undated  
Digital content available  
Testimonial volume to Maury, 1859  
Digital content available |
|           | Writings by Maury  
Articles, undated  
Digital content available |
| BOX 63    | Astronomical observations made at the National Observatory, Washington, D.C., 1846-1851  
Digital content available  
"Astronomy," undated  
First Lessons in Geography, 1884  
Digital content available  
Lieut. Maury’s Investigations of the Winds and Currents of the Sea, 1851  
Digital content available  
Physical Survey of Virginia, 1869  
Published letters and commentary, 1857-1871  
Digital content available  
Report of Lieut. Matthew F. Maury, United States Navy, on the Loss of the United States Mail Steamer "Central America," under the Command of Commander William Lewis Herndon, United States Navy (1857), inscribed by President Chester A. Arthur, 1885  
Digital content available |
## Misellany, 1836-1953

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 64    | Additions, 1831-1960  
Correspondence and family correspondence, each arranged chronologically. Miscellaneous material including genealogical records and news clippings. Arranged in two additions. |
| BOX 64    | 1978 Addition, 1858-1878, undated  
Family correspondence  
Index, undated  
Digital content available  
1858-1872  
Digital content available  
1873-1878, undated  
Digital content available  
Genealogy, undated See also Oversize  
Digital content available |
| BOX 64    | 1997 Addition, circa 1831-1960, undated  
Correspondence  
circa 1831-1837  
Digital content available  
1838  
Digital content available  
1839  
Digital content available  
1840  
Digital content available  
1841  
Digital content available  
1842-1843  
Digital content available  
1844-1846  
Digital content available  
1847-1849 See also Oversize  
Digital content available  
1850-1859  
Digital content available  
1860-1872, undated  
Digital content available |
| BOX OV 1-OV 2 | Oversize, 1855-1873  
Diplomas, awards, and probate papers.  
Organized and described according to the series, folders, and boxes from which the items were removed. |
<p>| BOX OV 1 | Miscellany |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diplomas and awards, 1856, undated (Container 58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Document accompanying gold medal of honor at the Universal Exposition of 1855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commission as commander, Jan. 27, 1858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Award of 3,000 guineas in appreciation of interest of maritime science, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Probate, 1873 (Container 61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX OV 2</td>
<td>1978 Addition, 1858-1878, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX OV 2</td>
<td>Genealogy, undated (Container 64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1997 Addition, circa 1831-1960, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX OV 2</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1847-1849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Genealogical Chart of the Fontaine and Maury Families,&quot; undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lieut. Maury’s Investigations of the Winds and Currents of the Sea, 1851 (Container 64)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>