

Andrew H. Foote Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2024

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm81020933>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms005013>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2005
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Collection Summary

Title: Andrew H. Foote Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1822-1890

Bulk Dates: 1847-1857

ID No.: MSS20933

Creator: Foote, Andrew H. (Andrew Hull), 1806-1863

Extent: 1,000 items

Extent: 11 containers plus 1 oversize

Extent: 4.4 linear feet

Extent: 5 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm81020933>

Summary: Naval officer. Correspondence, letterbooks, manuscript of "Africa and the American Flag" (1854), journals, logbooks, miscellaneous ships' records, and other papers relating principally to Foote's naval career, trade with Japan, missionaries in Hawaii, Civil War naval actions, and Foote's personal life. Also includes a journal, 1845-1847, kept by Madison Rush on a cruise from New York to China and South America.

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

Armstrong, James, 1794-1868--Correspondence.
Biddle, Thomas, 1776-1857--Correspondence.
Blundell, Edward A.--Correspondence.
Dobbin, James C. (James Cochran), 1814-1857--Correspondence.
Du Pont, Samuel Francis, 1803-1865--Correspondence.
Foote, Andrew H. (Andrew Hull), 1806-1863.
Foote, Andrew H. (Andrew Hull), 1806-1863. Africa and the American flag. 1854.
Graham, William A. (William Alexander), 1804-1875--Correspondence.
Gregory, Francis H., 1789-1866--Correspondence.
Hastings, George F.--Correspondence.
Ingraham, Duncan N. (Duncan Nathaniel), 1802-1891--Correspondence.
Lenthall, John, 1807-1882--Correspondence.
Marcy, William L. (William Learned), 1786-1857--Correspondence.
Powell, Levin M., 1800-1885--Correspondence.
Preston, William Ballard, 1805-1862--Correspondence.
Read, George C. (George Campbell), 1787-1862--Correspondence.
Roberts, Joseph J. (Joseph Jenkins), 1809-1876--Correspondence.
Rush, Madison, active 1845-1847. Madison Rush journal. 1845-1847.
Smith, Joseph, 1790-1877--Correspondence.
Toucey, Isaac, 1796-1869--Correspondence.
Tudor, John, active 1840-1850--Correspondence.

Organizations

Great Britain. Royal Navy.
John Adams (Ship)
Perry (Brig)
Portsmouth (Sloop of war)
United States. Naval Asylum.
United States. Navy--Foreign service--China.
United States. Navy--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

United States. Navy. African Squadron.
United States. Navy. East India Squadron.

Subjects

Americans--China.
Barrier Forts, Battle of the, China, 1856.
Missionaries--Hawaii.
Ship's papers--19th century.
Slave trade--Africa, West.

Places

Africa, West--Description and travel.
China--Commerce--United States.
Fort Donelson, Battle of, Tenn., 1862.
Guangzhou (China)
Japan--Commerce--United States.
South America--Description and travel.
Tennessee--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
United States--Commerce--China.
United States--Commerce--History--19th century.
United States--Commerce--Japan.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Naval operations.

Occupations

Naval officers.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Andrew H. Foote, naval officer, were given to the Library of Congress by Kate N. Foote in 1911 and 1917. Small additions were purchased in 1941 and 1979, and another addition was given to the Library in 1992 by Madilyn E. Upton.

Processing History

The papers of Andrew H. Foote were processed in 1984 by Audrey Walker. The finding aid was revised in 2003 by Patrick Kerwin. A commission signed by Abraham Lincoln was added as an oversize item in 2012. The finding aid was updated in 2024 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

Transfers

A photograph has been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress where it is identified as a part of these papers.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Andrew H. Foote 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 these papers is available on five reels. 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 or reel number, Andrew H. Foote Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

| Date | Event |
|----------------|---|
| 1806, Sept. 12 | Born, New Haven, Conn. |
| 1822 | Attended United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y. Appointed acting midshipman, United States Navy |
| 1827 | Experienced religious conversion during Caribbean cruise |
| 1828 | Married Caroline Flagg (died 1838) |
| 1837-1841 | On cruises in Mediterranean and around globe |
| 1842 | Married Caroline Augusta Street |
| 1842-1843 | Commander, United States Naval Asylum, Philadelphia, Pa. |
| 1843 | 1st lieutenant on <i>Cumberland</i> (frigate), where he formed a temperance society and made this ship the first temperance ship in the navy |
| 1849-1851 | Commanded <i>Perry</i> (brig), a ship in the United States African Squadron, patrolling the coast of Africa in order to suppress the slave trade |
| 1855 | Member, Naval Efficiency Board |
| 1856-1858 | Commanded <i>Portsmouth</i> (sloop-of-war), patrolling seas of China and the East Indies; captured the four barrier forts below Canton, China, as punishment for attacks on the American flag |
| 1861 | In charge of Brooklyn Navy Yard, Brooklyn, N.Y. |
| 1861-1862 | In command of naval operations on the upper Mississippi River Took part in capture of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson in Tennessee Commissioned rear admiral |
| 1863 | Chief, Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting Appointed to succeed Samuel F. Du Pont in command of Charleston (S.C.) Squadron |
| 1863, June 26 | Died enroute to Charleston, S.C.; buried, New Haven, Conn. |

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Andrew Hull Foote (1806-1863) span the years 1822-1890, with the bulk of the material dating from 1847 to 1857. The collection consists of [correspondence](#), [letterbooks](#), Foote's [manuscript](#) of *Africa and the American Flag* (1854), [journals and logbooks](#), [watch and quarter station books](#), and [miscellaneous](#) items.

The Foote Papers center around two extended cruises in which Foote commanded vessels in United States naval squadrons patrolling the coast of Africa and the seas of China and the East Indies. Between 1849 and 1851, Foote commanded the *Perry*, a brig of the United States African Squadron, patrolling the western coast of Africa under terms of the 1842 treaty with Great Britain for the suppression of the slave trade. Letters in the [correspondence](#) series and in three letterbooks covering the years 1849-1852 are devoted almost exclusively to this operation. Most of the correspondence is exchanged with Francis H. Gregory, commander of the United States naval forces on the coast of Africa, secretaries of the navy William Ballard Preston and William A. Graham, and George F. Hastings, senior officer of the southern division of the British Squadron. The letters indicate international issues raised by the detention of ships flying the American flag by

British vessels and reveal the role of the commanders in resolving some of the incidents. Correspondence between Foote and his superiors relates to sailing orders and reports of ships boarded, captured, or under litigation in British admiralty courts. It also contains descriptions of ports visited, comments on conditions aboard ship, and an assessment by Foote of the effect of the patrols on the suppression of the slave trade. Among the ships most frequently discussed in the correspondence are the *Navarro*, the *Volusia*, and the *Louisa Breton*, all captured by the British, and the *Martha* and the *Chatsworth*, captured by the Perry. Foote's correspondence also includes copies of material retrieved from the writing desk of Henry Merrill, captain of the *Martha*, which Merrill had thrown overboard.

Correspondence relating to the cruise of the *Perry* is supplemented by the ship's logbooks and Foote's private journal covering the period 1849-1851. The journal contains references to Foote's health and state of mind, comments on his personal life, including his emphasis on religion, and descriptions of the pursuit of ships and other events mentioned in his letters and logbooks. At the top of many of the pages of the journal are subject annotations in an unidentified handwriting. A gap exists in the journal for the period 2 October-9 December 1850, and Foote later used pages at the end of this journal for drafts of letters and reports in 1856 during the cruise of the U.S. sloop-of-war *Portsmouth*.

Foote's papers also document his tour of duty as commander of the *Portsmouth* during a three-year cruise, 1856-1858, as part of the United States East India and China Seas Squadron. Material relating to the cruise is found in the [correspondence](#) series, in a letterbook for 1856-1858, and in a journal and logbook of the *Portsmouth*. Correspondence was primarily with James Armstrong, commander of the squadron, and James C. Dobbin, secretary of the navy. Most of the letters between October 1856 and early 1857 relate to the capture of the four forts below Canton, known as the barrier forts, which Foote destroyed in retaliation for attacks on the American flag. Other letters describe the effect of the conflict between Great Britain and China on the lives of Americans living in China or engaged in commerce in East Asia. Correspondence also reflects the growing interest of the United States in developing trade in East Asia, particularly with Japan which opened only the ports of Simoda and Hakodadi (now Hakodate) to Americans. Several letters written in the spring of 1857 concern the *Henrietta Maria*, abandoned by her officers and men and claimed as salvage by men from the *Portsmouth*.

Many of the letters in the [correspondence](#) series are copies, some of which appear to have been part of a letterbook or other paginated units. At some point the paginated sequence of this part of the Foote Papers was partially destroyed and has not been reconstructed here. Rather, these letters are now arranged in chronological order as far as possible.

Papers reflecting other phases of Foote's career are less numerous than those for the two cruises. A letterbook, more properly a journal of his cruise aboard the U.S. frigate *John Adams*, is primarily devoted to an explanation and justification of the part Foote and other officers played in an incident involving religious dissension between American Protestant missionaries and local Roman Catholics on the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) in the fall of 1839. The journal contains copies of letters written to various individuals which were subsequently published in newspapers, thereby disclosing the circumstances of the affair to the public. In a December 18, 1839, entry, Foote compared the activities of the Roman Catholics and missionaries on the island of Tahiti with those occurring on the Sandwich Islands. The last pages of the journal contain entries reflecting on life and religion which he made on the day he set aside for fasting, usually monthly, during the year 1840. These entries generally conclude with a prayer. Documents relating to Foote's years at the United States Naval Asylum are limited to correspondence in the letterbook for 1842-1846. There are also only a few items from his service as commander of naval operations on the upper Mississippi River during the Civil War. One of these is a report written February 15, 1862, describing an attack on Fort Donelson.

The remaining volumes consist of a journal of Madison Rush, who was later a lieutenant aboard the *Perry* with Foote, covering his cruise as acting master of the *Columbus* (ship-of-the-line) on a trip from New York to China and South America, 1845-1847; a table of observations of wind and weather made aboard the *Vandalia* (frigate), 1857-1860; watch and quarter station books for the *Portsmouth*, the *Cumberland*, and the *Delaware*; a book of rules and regulations for the *John Adams*; and an autograph album of Augustus Foote, mainly covering the years 1863-1866.

Correspondents in the Foote Papers include James Armstrong, Thomas Biddle, Edward A. Blundell, James C. Dobbin, Samuel Francis Du Pont, William A. Graham, Francis H. Gregory, George F. Hastings, Duncan N. Ingraham, John Lenthall, William L. Marcy, Levin M. Powell, William Ballard Preston, George C. Read, Joseph J. Roberts, Joseph Smith, Isaac Toucey, John Tudor, and Daniel Webster.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in six series:

- [Correspondence, 1838-1863](#)
- [Writings, 1854](#)
- [Letterbooks, 1839-1858](#)
- [Ships' Papers, 1835-1860](#)
- [Miscellany, 1822-1890](#)
- [Oversize, 1862](#)

Description of Series

| Container | Series |
|---------------------|--|
| BOX 1-3 REEL 1-2 | <p><u>Correspondence, 1838-1863</u> Letters received and copies of letters sent with enclosures or attachments, and a few miscellaneous papers. Arranged chronologically.</p> |
| BOX 4-5 REEL 2-3 | <p><u>Writings, 1854</u> Manuscript of <i>Africa and the American Flag</i>.</p> |
| BOX 6-11 REEL 3 | <p><u>Letterbooks, 1839-1858</u> Copies of letters received and sent. Arranged chronologically. Volume 6 is primarily a journal. Volume 8 is indexed.</p> |
| BOX 12-23 REEL 3-5 | <p><u>Ships' Papers, 1835-1860</u> Journals, logbooks, watch and quarter station books, a book of rules, and a table of weather observations. Arranged by name of ship or type of material.</p> |
| BOX 24-25 REEL 5 | <p><u>Miscellany, 1822-1890</u> A ledger and an autograph album. Arranged by type of material.</p> |
| BOX OV 1 not filmed | <p><u>Oversize, 1862</u> Foote's commission as chief of the U.N. Navy Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting.</p> |

Container List

*Microfilm shelf no. 18,988

| Container | Contents |
|---------------------------|--|
| BOX 1-3 REEL 1-2 | Correspondence, 1838-1863 Letters received and copies of letters sent with enclosures or attachments, and a few miscellaneous papers. Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 1 REEL 1 | 1838, Apr. 18-1850, Oct. 19 |
| BOX 2 REEL 1 | 1850, Oct. 20-1856, Dec. 10 |
| BOX 3 REEL 2 | 1856, Dec. 12-1863, June 8 |
| BOX 4-5 REEL 2-3 | Writings, 1854 Manuscript of <i>Africa and the American Flag</i> . |
| BOX 4-5 REEL 2-3 | <i>Africa and the American Flag</i> , 1854 |
| BOX 6-11 REEL 3 | Letterbooks, 1839-1858 Copies of letters received and sent. Arranged chronologically. Volume 6 is primarily a journal. Volume 8 is indexed. |
| BOX 6 REEL 3 | 1839, Nov. 5-1842, Jan. 1 (mainly a journal) |
| BOX 7 REEL 3 | 1842, Nov. 30-1846, Oct. 20 |
| BOX 8 REEL 3 | 1849, Oct. 12-1852, May 9 (indexed) |
| BOX 9 REEL 3 | 1850, Jan. 7-Nov. 29 |
| BOX 10 REEL 3 | 1850, Oct. 20-1851, Dec. 26 |
| BOX 11 REEL 3 | 1856, Feb. 16-1858, July 24 |
| BOX 12-23 REEL 3-5 | Ships' Papers, 1835-1860 Journals, logbooks, watch and quarter station books, a book of rules, and a table of weather observations. Arranged by name of ship or type of material. |
| BOX 12 REEL 3 | Watch and quarter station books <i>Delaware</i> (ship-of-the-line), 1835 |
| BOX 13 REEL 4 | <i>Cumberland</i> (frigate), 1843-1845 |
| BOX 14 REEL 4 | <i>Perry</i> (brig) Private journal, including drafts of papers from voyage of the <i>Portsmouth</i> (sloop-of-war), 1856 |
| BOX 15 REEL 4 | Journal and logbooks 1849, Nov. 17-1850, Nov. 7 |
| BOX 16 REEL 4 | 1850, Nov. 8-1851, Sept. 14 |
| BOX 17 REEL 4 | 1851, Sept. 15-Dec. 23 |
| BOX 18 REEL 4 | <i>Portsmouth</i> (sloop-of-war) Orders and watch station book, 1856 |

Ships' Papers, 1835-1860

| Container | Contents |
|----------------------------|---|
| BOX 19 REEL 4 | Journal and logbook, 1856, Apr. 22-1858, June 17 |
| BOX 20 REEL 5 | Abstract log, 1856, May 4-1858, June 13 |
| BOX 21 REEL 5 | Rules on board <i>John Adams</i> (frigate), Thomas W. Wyman, commander, 1837 |
| BOX 22 REEL 5 | Journal of Madison Rush, <i>Columbus</i> (ship-of-the-line), 1845-1847 |
| BOX 23 REEL 5 | Observations of wind and weather, <i>Vandalia</i> (frigate), 1857-1860 |
| BOX 24-25 REEL 5 | Miscellany, 1822-1890 A ledger and an autograph album. Arranged by type of material. |
| BOX 24 REEL 5 | Ledger, 1822-1828 |
| BOX 25 REEL 5 | Autograph album of Augustus Foote, 1863-1890 |
| BOX OV 1 not filmed | Oversize, 1862 Foote's commission as chief of the U.N. Navy Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting. |
| BOX OV 1 not filmed | Commission signed by Abraham Lincoln and Gideon Welles appointing Foote chief of the U.S. Navy Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting, 1862 |