

**Richard Dale Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**1998**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm81056952>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms007038>

Prepared by Karen Linn Femia

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## Collection Summary

**Title:** Richard Dale Papers

**Span Dates:** 1778-1918

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1778-1830)

**ID No.:** MSS56952

**Creator:** Dale, Richard, 1756-1826

**Extent:** 7 items

**Extent:** 1 container plus 1 oversize

**Extent:** 0.6 linear feet

**Extent:** 1 microfilm reel

**Language:** Collection material in English

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm81056952>

**Summary:** Naval officer; served with the British navy from 1776 to 1777 when he joined the Continental Navy, serving as first lieutenant to John Paul Jones on the *Bonhomme Richard*. Correspondence, commissions, mathematics notebook, and journal/logbook (1787-1789) kept on a voyage aboard a merchant ship to Canton, China, and to New Guinea. Includes letterbook (1801-1802) of Dale's outgoing correspondence while in command of the U.S. frigate *President* in the Mediterranean during the Tripolitan War.

## 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

Bainbridge, William, 1774-1833--Correspondence.

Dale, Richard, 1756-1826.

Jones, John Paul, 1747-1792--Correspondence.

Kennedy, John Pendleton, 1795-1870--Correspondence.

Read, George C. (George Campbell), 1787-1862--Correspondence.

Smith, Robert, 1757-1842--Correspondence.

Stoddert, Benjamin, 1751-1813--Correspondence.

### Organizations

Bon Homme Richard (Ship)

Great Britain. Royal Navy--Officers.

President (Frigate)

United States. Continental Navy--Officers.

United States. Navy--History.

United States. Navy--Officers.

### Subjects

Merchant ships--United States.

Voyages and travels.

### Places

Guangzhou (China)--Description and travel.

Mediterranean Sea.

New Guinea--Description and travel.

United States--History, Naval.

United States--History--Tripolitan War, 1801-1805--Naval operations.

### Occupations

Naval officers, British.

Naval officers.

## Provenance

The papers of Richard Dale, British and American naval officer, were deposited in the Library of Congress in 1976 by the Naval History Division. The 1801 letter written by Dale to Eaton was purchased by the Library in 1917.

## Copyright Status

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

## Access and Restrictions

The papers of Richard Dale 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 on one reel was made of the 1787-1789 ship's journal. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan.

## Preferred Citation

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

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Richard Dale (1756-1826) span the years 1778 to 1918 with the bulk of the material dating from the 1770s to the 1820s. The papers consist of correspondence, commissions, a mathematics notebook kept while Dale was in Mill Prison, Plymouth, England, a journal/log of a voyage aboard a merchant ship to Canton, China, and New Guinea, 1787-1789 (available on microfilm), and a license and an appointment paper of two of Dale's descendants.

Dale was born in 1756 near Norfolk, Virginia. He served with the British Navy, 1776-1777, but joined the colonial cause in 1777. He served as John Paul Jones's first lieutenant on the *BonHomme Richard* in the battle with HMS *Serapis*. In 1801, Dale was sent to the Mediterranean to blockade Tripoli with a five-ship fleet at the outbreak of the Tripolitan War. He died in Philadelphia in 1826. One of the letterbooks contains copies of Dale's outgoing letters while in command of the United States frigate *President* in Tripoli, 1801-1802. Some of his correspondence during the Tripolitan War are in the other letterbook (letters numbered 19, 24, 25, 33, 40, 42). This letterbook includes letters written to Dale, many letters to Rear Admiral George Campbell Read (1787-1862), Dale's son-in-law, and letters to several others. The letters were placed in alphabetical order by name of correspondent, placed in a bound volume with a number assigned to each letter. The letters are from various naval officers and secretaries of the navy, including William Bainbridge, John Paul Jones, and Secretaries of the Navy John P. Kennedy, Robert Smith, and Benjamin Stoddert. Commissions and appointment papers are signed by John Adams, Millard Fillmore, John Hancock, George Washington, and Daniel Webster.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by type of material.

## Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Commissions and appointment papers, 1779-1785, 1851
BOX 1	Journal, 1787-1789 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 1	Letter, Dale to William Eaton, 1801
BOX 1	Letterbooks
BOX 1	Copies of outgoing correspondence, 1801-1802
BOX 1	Letters to Dale and George C. Read, et al., 1780-1845
BOX 1	License to Edward C. Dale to serve as mate on steam vessels, 1918
BOX 1	Mathematics notebook, 1778
BOX OV 1	Journal, 1787-1789 Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 20,499