A. D. Bache Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2003

Contact information: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact
Catalog Record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm75011494
Additional search options available at: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms007077

Prepared by Marilyn Parr
Revised by Brian McGuire
Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2007
Revised 2010 April
Collection Summary
Title: A. D. Bache Papers
Span Dates: 1828-1863
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1836-1863)
ID No.: MSS11494
Creator: Bache, A. D. (Alexander Dallas), 1806-1867
Extent: 2,000 items
Extent: 18 containers
Extent: 7.2 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/mm75011494
Summary: Scientist, educator, and superintendent of the United States Coast Survey. Correspondence, a journal, and miscellaneous material reflecting Bache’s service with the United States Coast Survey, his work at the Dudley Observatory, and his European trip to study educational methods.

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
Crittenden, John J. (John Jordan), 1787-1863--Correspondence.
Dahlgren, John Adolphus Bernard, 1809-1870--Correspondence.
Dana, James Dwight, 1813-1895--Correspondence.
Davis, Charles Henry, 1807-1877--Correspondence.
Dean, George W. (George Washington), 1825-1897--Correspondence.
Dudley, Blandina Bleecker, 1783-1863--Correspondence.
Gould, Benjamin Apthorp, 1824-1896--Correspondence.
Henry, Joseph, 1797-1878--Correspondence.
Peirce, Benjamin, 1809-1880--Correspondence.
Preble, George Henry, 1816-1885--Correspondence.
Silliman, Benjamin, 1816-1885--Correspondence.
Stevens, Isaac Ingalls, 1818-1862--Correspondence.
Waring, George E. (George Edwin), 1833-1898--Correspondence.

Organizations
Dudley Observatory.
Girard College--Presidents.
United States Coast Survey.
United States. Light-House Board.

Subjects
Astronomy--Research.
Cavalry--Missouri.
Discoveries in science.
Education--Europe--Methodology.
International relations.
Navigation--Atlantic Coast (U.S.)
Peninsular Campaign, 1862.
War--Moral and ethical aspects.
Weights and measures--United States.

Places
Atlantic Coast (U.S.)--Maps.
Europe--Description and travel.
Georgia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Missouri--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Pennsylvania--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Philadelphia (Pa.)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
South Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
United States--Foreign relations--19th century.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--African Americans.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Blockades.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Campaigns.
Virginia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Titles
Alexander Dallas Bache papers

Occupations
Educators.
Scientists.

Provenance
The papers of A. D. Bache, physicist and administrator, were deposited in the Library of Congress by Caroline Henry, daughter of Bache's colleague, Joseph Henry, in 1914. A small addition was given by Alice Seoville Barry in 1981 and transferred to the collection from the Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection in 2003. One item was purchased in 1973.

Processing History
The A. D. Bache Papers were processed in 1975. The finding aid was revised and expanded with the addition of a few items in 2003 and revised again in 2009.

Additional Guides
The deposit of 1914 has been briefly described in the Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress, 1914, pp. 59-60.

Transfers
Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Some maps have been transferred to the Geography and Map Division. A photograph has been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Bache Papers.

Related Material
In addition to the correspondence in the Bache Papers, there are Bache letters in other collections in the Manuscript Division, including the papers of Lewis Reeves Gibbes, Matthew F. Maury, Samuel F. B. Morse, and Simon Newcomb. Other repositories holding collections relating to Bache are the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California; the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The Bache Papers 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 five reels. Consult a reference librarian 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.

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1821-1825</td>
<td>Attended United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825-1826</td>
<td>Assistant, Department of Engineering, United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1826-1828</td>
<td>Assigned to the Army Corps of Engineers, Newport, R.I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>Married Nancy Clarke Fowler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828-1836</td>
<td>Professor of natural philosophy and chemistry, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>Elected member, American Philosophical Society and the Franklin Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833-1836</td>
<td>Member, Board of Trustees, Girard College, Philadelphia, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>Elected president, Girard College, Philadelphia, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Went to Europe to observe educational institutions, methods, and discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Published Report on Education in Europe. Philadelphia: Lydia R. Bailey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Resigned as president of Girard College to be superintendent of schools, Philadelphia, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>Professor, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843-1867</td>
<td>Superintendent, United States Coast Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850-1851</td>
<td>President, American Association for the Advancement of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855-1857</td>
<td>President, American Philosophical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861-1865</td>
<td>Vice president, United States Sanitary Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Planned the defense of Philadelphia, Pa., against Robert E. Lee's advance into the North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863-1867</td>
<td>Charter member and first president, National Academy of Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864-1865</td>
<td>Visited Europe to recover his health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867, Feb. 17</td>
<td>Died in Newport, R.I.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scope and Content Note

The papers of Alexander Dallas Bache (1806-1867) span the years 1828-1863 and include six series: General Correspondence, Special Correspondence, Journal, Scrapbook, Miscellany, and Addition. The bulk of the material is concentrated in the years 1836-1838 and 1857-1863.

The General Correspondence series relates mainly to the United States Coast Survey when Bache served as superintendent, 1843-1867. During his administration the Coast Survey published detailed maps of the East Coast of the United States. Its navigation charts of the Carolina and Georgia coasts were used during the Civil War to assist in enforcing the blockade of Southern ports.

Bache devised new instruments and methods to improve the work of the Coast Survey. While with the Survey, he also served on the Light-House Board and was superintendent of weights and measures, coordinating these activities to produce detailed navigation charts. Correspondents include John Jordan Crittenden, John A. Dahlgren, Charles H. Davis, Benjamin A. Gould, Joseph Henry, Benjamin Peirce, Benjamin Silliman (1816-1885), and George E. Waring.

The Dudley Observatory in Albany, New York, was established in 1856 for the advancement of astronomy. Bache was a member of the Scientific Council which directed the Observatory’s research and controlled daily operations; other council members were Benjamin Gould, Joseph Henry, and Benjamin Peirce. A conflict of interest between the Scientific Council and the Board of Trustees, which almost destroyed the Observatory, is detailed in the Special Correspondence series. Principal correspondents were Blandina Dudley, main financial supporter of the Observatory, and Benjamin Gould, Joseph Henry, Thomas Olcott, Benjamin Peirce, and C. H. F. Peters.

A scrapbook of newspaper clippings reflects Bache’s interest in scientific developments of the period. The Miscellany series consists of a partial index of correspondents between 1857 and 1860, and the Addition contains photocopies of letters from George W. Dean to Bache, 1860-1861.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in six series:

- General Correspondence, 1828-1863
- Special Correspondence, 1855-1859
- Journal, 1836-1838
- Scrapbook, 1829-1843
- Miscellany, 1857-1860
- Addition, 1860-1861
### Description of Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Series</th>
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</table>
| BOX 1-9 REEL 1-4 | **General Correspondence, 1828-1863**  
Bound volumes of letters received and sent by Bache.  
Arranged chronologically and therein alphabetically by name of correspondent. |
| BOX 10 REEL 4 | **Special Correspondence, 1855-1859**  
Bound volume of letters sent and received concerning the Dudley Observatory.  
Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 11-16 REEL 5 | **Journal, 1836-1838**  
Bound volumes of a journal kept by Bache on a trip to Europe to study educational methods.  
Arranged chronologically with undated notes at the ends of volumes 15 and 16. |
| BOX 17 REEL 5 | **Scrapbook, 1829-1843**  
Newspaper clippings on scientific developments and other subjects of interest to Bache.  
Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 18 REEL 5 | **Miscellany, 1857-1860**  
Partial index to Bache correspondence and a note.  
Arranged by type of material. |
| BOX 18 not filmed | **Addition, 1860-1861**  
Photocopies of letters from George W. Dean to Bache.  
Arranged chronologically. |
## Container List

Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 16,511

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
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| BOX 1-9 REEL 1-4 | **General Correspondence, 1828-1863**  
Bound volumes of letters received and sent by Bache.  
Arranged chronologically and therein alphabetically by name of correspondent. |
| BOX 1 REEL 1 | 1828, May 29-1857, Sept. 10 |
| BOX 2 REEL 1 | 1857, Sept. 18-1858, June 4 |
| BOX 3 REEL 1-2 | 1858, June 5-Dec. 23 |
| BOX 4 REEL 1 | 1858, Dec. 24-1859, Aug. 2 |
| BOX 5 REEL 1 | 1859, Aug. 5-1860, May 30 |
| BOX 6 REEL 1 | 1860, May 31-1861, June 10 |
| BOX 7 REEL 1 | 1861, June 11-Nov. 28 |
| BOX 8 REEL 3-4 | 1861, Nov. 29-1862, Apr. 19 |
| BOX 9 REEL 4 | 1862, Apr. 21-1863, Apr. 10, undated |
| BOX 10 REEL 4 | **Special Correspondence, 1855-1859**  
Bound volume of letters sent and received concerning the Dudley Observatory.  
Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 10 REEL 4 | Dudley Observatory, Albany, N.Y., 1855-1859, undated |
| BOX 11-16 REEL 5 | **Journal, 1836-1838**  
Bound volumes of a journal kept by Bache on a trip to Europe to study educational methods.  
Arranged chronologically with undated notes at the ends of volumes 15 and 16. |
| BOX 11 REEL 5 | 1836, Nov. 2-16 |
| BOX 12 REEL 5 | 1836, Nov. 17-Dec. 10 |
| BOX 13 REEL 5 | 1836, Dec. 17-30 |
| BOX 14 REEL 5 | 1837 |
| BOX 14 REEL 5 | Jan. 1-Feb. 5 |
| BOX 15 REEL 5 | Nov. 19-Dec. 9, undated |
| BOX 16 REEL 5 | 1838, Jan. 1-Mar. 29, undated |
| BOX 17 REEL 5 | **Scrapbook, 1829-1843**  
Newspaper clippings on scientific developments and other subjects of interest to Bache.  
Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 17 REEL 5 | Newspaper clippings, 1829-1843 |
| BOX 18 REEL 5 | **Miscellany, 1857-1860**  
Partial index to Bache correspondence and a note.  
Arranged by type of material. |
<p>| BOX 18 REEL 5 | Partial index |</p>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 18 REEL 5</td>
<td>1858-1859, A-H</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 18 REEL 5</td>
<td>1859-1860, H-K</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 18 REEL 5</td>
<td>1860, A-Z</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 18 not filmed</td>
<td>Note, undated</td>
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**Addition, 1860-1861**

Photocopies of letters from George W. Dean to Bache.
Arranged chronologically.

**BOX 18 not filmed**

Photocopies of letters from George W. Dean to Bache, 1860-1861