

**Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2000**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm81023044>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms009046>

Prepared by Patrick Kerwin

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2009  
Revised 2021 May

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough Papers

**Span Dates:** 1797-1874

**ID No.:** MSS23044

**Creator:** Goldsborough, Louis Malesherbes, 1805-1877

**Extent:** 8,000 items

**Extent:** 27 containers plus 2 oversize

**Extent:** 7 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English.

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm81023044>

**Summary:** Naval officer. Correspondence, military records, financial papers, printed material, illustrations, and other papers concerning Goldsborough's career in the United States Navy.

**Online Content:** The Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough Papers are available on the Library of Congress Web site at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/collmss.ms000105>. *To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the online edition as available.*

## 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

Barron, James, 1769-1851--Correspondence.  
Black, Jeremiah S. (Jeremiah Sullivan), 1810-1883--Correspondence.  
Burnside, Ambrose Everett, 1824-1881.  
Cabell, J. L. (James Lawrence), 1813-1889--Correspondence.  
Chase, Salmon P. (Salmon Portland), 1808-1873--Correspondence.  
Crittenden, John J. (John Jordan), 1787-1863--Correspondence.  
Decatur, Stephen, 1779-1820--Correspondence.  
Du Pont, Samuel Francis, 1803-1865--Correspondence.  
Everett, Edward, 1794-1865--Correspondence.  
Fox, Gustavus Vasa, 1821-1883--Correspondence.  
Goldsborough, Louis Malesherbes, 1805-1877.  
Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865.  
Motley, John Lothrop, 1814-1877--Correspondence.  
Smith, Joseph, 1790-1877--Correspondence.  
Surratt, John H. (John Harrison), 1844-1916.  
Tatnall, Josiah, 1795-1871--Correspondence.  
Upshur, A. P. (Abel Parker), 1790-1844--Correspondence.  
Welles, Gideon, 1802-1878--Correspondence.  
Wilkes, Charles, 1798-1877--Correspondence.

### Organizations

Castillo de San Juan de Ulúa (Mexico)  
Merrimack (Frigate)  
Minnesota (Frigate)  
United States Naval Academy.  
United States. Navy.  
Virginia (Ironclad)

### Subjects

Blockade--South Carolina--Charleston Harbor.  
Burnside's Expedition to North Carolina, 1862.

Cabinet officers.  
Dueling.  
Hampton Roads, Battle of, Va., 1862.  
Mexican War, 1846-1848.

### **Places**

Charleston (S.C.)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Charleston Harbor (S.C.)  
James River (Va.)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
North Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Roanoke Island (N.C.)--History--Capture, 1862.  
South Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Blockades.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Naval operations.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Virginia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

### **Titles**

*Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough Papers at the Library of Congress*

### **Occupations**

Naval officers.

## **Provenance**

The papers of Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough were purchased by the Library of Congress in 1917.

## **Other Repositories**

Other collections of Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough material are in the New York Public Library, New York, N.Y., and the Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

## **Copyright Status**

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

## **Access and Restrictions**

The papers of Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough 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**

Selected documents relating to the Civil War have been included in *A People At War*, a microfilm edition issued by Chadwyck-Healy, 1989-1990.

## Online Content

The Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough Papers are available on the Library of Congress Web site at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/collmss.ms000105>. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the online edition as available.

## Preferred Citation

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

## Biographical Note

| Date          | Event  |
|---------------|--|
| 1805, Feb. 18 | Born, Washington, D.C.   |
| 1812          | Received a midshipman's warrant, United States Navy  |
| 1816          | Began service as a midshipman, United States Navy  |
| 1823-1824     | Acting lieutenant, United States Navy  |
| 1825          | Commissioned lieutenant  |
| 1827-1829     | Served in the Mediterranean in command of four ships   |
| 1830          | Given charge of the newly created Depot of Charts and Instruments (of which he was the originator), Washington, D.C.   |
| 1831          | Married Elizabeth Gamble Wirt  |
| 1833          | Commanded mounted volunteers in Seminole War   |
| 1841          | Promoted to commander  |
| 1843-1846     | Stationed at Portsmouth, N.H.  |
| 1845          | Published <i>A Reply by L. M. Goldsborough to an Attack Made upon the Navy of the United States by Samuel E. Coures, President of the Peace Society</i> . Portsmouth, N.H.: C. W. Brewster |
| 1848          | Published, <i>Letter to John Y. Mason, Secretary of the Navy, Concerning the Assignment of Rank to Medical Officers and Pursers</i> . Washington, D.C.                                     |
| 1849-1850     | Senior naval member of a commission which explored California and Oregon   |
| 1853-1857     | Superintendent, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.  |
| 1855          | Promoted to captain  |
| 1859-1861     | Commanded Brazil Squadron  |
| 1861          | Took command of Atlantic Blockading Squadron   |
| 1862          | Promoted to rear admiral   |
| 1862          | Cooperated with Union General Ambrose Burnside in capture of Roanoke Island, N.C.  |
| 1862-1865     | Performed administrative duties, Washington, D.C.  |
| 1865          | Took charge of European Squadron   |
| 1868          | Stationed in Washington, D.C.  |
| 1873          | Retired from United States Navy  |
| 1877, Feb. 20 | Died, Washington, D.C.   |

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough (1805-1877) span the years 1797-1874 and include correspondence, military records, financial papers, printed material, illustrations, and other material relating to his career in the United States Navy.

The collection is organized in five series: [Correspondence and Other Papers](#), [Letterbooks](#), [Military Papers](#), [Miscellany](#), and [Oversize](#). Included is an account of the capture of Castillo de San Juan De Ulúa during the Mexican War in 1847, the capture of John H. Surratt, and Goldsborough's work as superintendent of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, 1853-1857. Also included are items from the Civil War relating to the blockade of Charleston Harbor, General Ambrose Everett Burnside's Roanoke Island expedition, operations on the James River, the scuttling of the *Merrimack*, Goldsborough's command of the *Minnesota* in Hampton Roads, Virginia, while awaiting an expected second attack of the *Virginia*, and visits to the front lines by Abraham Lincoln and members of his cabinet. A draft of a letter from Stephen Decatur to James Barron which led to a challenge and duel is also included.

Correspondents include Jeremiah S. Black, J. L. Cabell, Salmon P. Chase, John J. Crittenden, Samuel Francis Du Pont, Edward Everett, Gustavus Vasa Fox, John Lothrop Motley, Joseph Smith, Josiah Tatnall, A. P. Upshur, Gideon Welles, and Charles Wilkes

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in five series:

- [Correspondence and Other Papers, 1797-1874](#)
- [Letterbooks, 1853-1867](#)
- [Military Papers, 1852-1870](#)
- [Miscellany, 1836-1871](#)
- [Oversize, 1861-1869](#)

## Description of Series

| Container     | Series   |
|---------------|--|
| BOX 1-24      | <p><b><u>Correspondence and Other Papers, 1797-1874</u></b><br/>Correspondence and other material.<br/>Arranged chronologically in 23 bound volumes, plus unbound material in Container 24.</p>              |
| BOX 24        | <p><b><u>Letterbooks, 1853-1867</u></b><br/>Letterbooks.<br/>Arranged chronologically.</p>   |
| BOX 25        | <p><b><u>Military Papers, 1852-1870</u></b><br/>General orders, circulars, courts martial, and other material.<br/>Arranged by bound and unbound material and chronologically therein.</p>                   |
| BOX 25-27     | <p><b><u>Miscellany, 1836-1871</u></b><br/>Bills, circulars, notes, notebooks, journals, illustrations, and other material.<br/>Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.</p> |
| BOX OV 1-OV 2 | <p><b><u>Oversize, 1861-1869</u></b><br/>Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.</p>  |

# Container List

| Container | Contents  |
|-----------|---|
| BOX 1-24  | <b>Correspondence and Other Papers, 1797-1874</b><br>Correspondence and other material.<br>Arranged chronologically in 23 bound volumes, plus unbound material in Container 24. |
| BOX 1     | 1797; 1817, Jan. 1-1831, Oct. 26<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 2     | 1831, Oct. 28-1834, June 24<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 3     | 1834, June 28-1837, Sept. 15<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 4     | 1837, Oct. 27-1841, Apr. 23<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 5     | 1841, Apr. 29-1847, Feb. 2<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 6     | 1847, Feb. 18-1852, May 15<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 7     | 1852, May 17-1856, Aug. 21<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 8     | 1856, Aug. 22-1859, Oct. 21<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 9     | 1859, Oct. 22-1861, Feb. 5<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 10    | 1861, Feb. 6-Nov. 7<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 11    | 1861, Nov. 8-1862, July 13<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 12    | 1862, July 15-1863, Sept. 16<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 13    | 1863, Sept. 17-1865, May 28<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 14    | 1865, May 29-Dec. 19<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 15    | 1865, Dec. 20-1866, June 15<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 16    | 1866, June 16-Nov. 24<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 17    | 1866, Nov. 25-1867, Apr. 14<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 18    | 1867, Apr. 15-1869, May 14<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 19    | 1869, May 15-1874, Dec. 15<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 20    | Undated   |

## Correspondence and Other Papers, 1797-1874

| Container | Contents   |
|-----------|--|
| BOX 20    | 1 of 4<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 21    | 2 of 4<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 22    | 3 of 4<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 23    | 4 of 4<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 24    | 1862, Feb. 23-Mar. 20<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 24    | <b>Letterbooks, 1853-1867</b><br>Letterbooks.<br>Arranged chronologically.   |
| BOX 24    | 1853, Nov. 1-1855, Oct. 7<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 24    | 1855, Mar. 1-1857, Sept. 15<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 24    | 1866, Feb. 6-1867, July 14<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 25    | <b>Military Papers, 1852-1870</b><br>General orders, circulars, courts martial, and other material.<br>Arranged by bound and unbound material and chronologically therein.                   |
| BOX 25    | Bound  |
| BOX 25    | 1862-1867<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 25    | 1865, July 6-1866, Nov. 29<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 25    | Unbound, 1852, 1859, 1862-1870<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 25-27 | <b>Miscellany, 1836-1871</b><br>Bills, circulars, notes, notebooks, journals, illustrations, and other material.<br>Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein. |
| BOX 25    | Bills  |
| BOX 25    | 1834-1849<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 25    | 1850-1859<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 25    | 1860-1875<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 25    | Undated<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 26    | Circulars, 1862-1866<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |



## Miscellany, 1836-1871

| Container     | Contents  |
|---------------|---|
| BOX 26        | “Continuation of the Internal Rules on Board the Vessels of the Fleet,” undated<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 26        | Illustrations, 1841-1871 <i>See also Oversize</i><br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 26        | Journal of the Board to Examine Steam Machinery Afloat, 1869  |
| BOX 26        | Newspaper clippings, 1857-1866<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 26        | Notebook, 1843-1846, undated<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 27        | Printed matter, 1852-1867   |
| BOX 27        | 1852-1867 <i>See also Oversize</i><br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX 27        | Undated<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>  |
| BOX 27        | "Rigging, Proportions of for different class ships," presented by T. O. Selfridge, Dec. 1843<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |
| BOX OV 1-OV 2 | <b>Oversize, 1861-1869</b><br>Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.  |
| BOX OV 1      | Miscellany  |
| BOX OV 1      | Illustrations (Container 26)<br>Illustration of caps of 10 and 8 inch shells, March 1841<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a><br>"Sketch Showing the Position of 3 Buoys placed on the Middle-Ground in Neuse River, N.C.," May 1862<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a><br>Two illustrations of "J. Gregory's Patent No. 2303," Sept. 18, 1863<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a><br>"Plan of Ordnance Foundry," Nov. 10, 1869<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a><br>"The Niphon," undated<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a><br>"Part of Saratoga's decks & Batteries," undated<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a> |
| BOX OV 2      | Printed matter, 1861, 1869, undated (Container 27)<br><a href="#">Digital content available</a>   |