

Charles J. Bonaparte Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2011

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm78013151>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms009084>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2009
Revised 2023 January

Collection Summary

Title: Charles J. Bonaparte Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1760-1921

Bulk Dates: 1874-1921

ID No.: MSS13151

Creator: Bonaparte, Charles J. (Charles Joseph), 1851-1921

Extent: 80,000 items

Extent: 264 containers plus 2 oversize

Extent: 106.4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78013151>

Summary: Lawyer, municipal and civil service reformer, and U.S. attorney general and secretary of the navy.

Correspondence, articles, speeches, memoranda, notes, personal miscellany, legal records, biographical material, clippings, printed matter, and other papers relating mainly to Bonaparte's public service and political career.

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

Bonaparte family.

Bonaparte, Charles J. (Charles Joseph), 1851-1921.

Brandeis, Louis Dembitz, 1856-1941--Correspondence.

Clark, Champ, 1850-1921--Correspondence.

Dana, Richard Henry, Jr., 1815-1882--Correspondence.

Eliot, Charles William, 1834-1926--Correspondence.

Garfield, James Rudolph, 1865-1950--Correspondence.

Gary, Elbert H. (Elbert Henry), 1846-1927--Correspondence.

Gibbons, James, 1834-1921--Correspondence.

Lodge, Henry Cabot, 1850-1924--Correspondence.

Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919--Correspondence.

Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919.

Schurz, Carl, 1829-1906--Correspondence.

Taft, William H. (William Howard), 1857-1930--Correspondence.

Tillman, Benjamin R. (Benjamin Ryan), 1847-1918--Correspondence.

Venable, Richard M. (Richard Morton), 1839-1910--Correspondence.

Wister, Owen, 1860-1938--Correspondence.

Woodruff, Clinton Rogers, 1868-1948--Correspondence.

Organizations

Catholic University of America.

Enoch Pratt Free Library.

Harvard University. Board of Overseers.

Maryland. Board of State Aid and Charities.

National Civic Federation.

National Civil Service Reform League (U.S.)

National Municipal League.

Progressive Party (U.S. : 1912)

Republican Party (U.S. : 1854-)

United States. Department of Justice.

United States. Navy Department.

Subjects

Charities--Maryland--Baltimore.
Charities--Maryland.
Civil service reform--United States.
Libraries--Maryland--Baltimore.
Municipal government--United States.
Public welfare--Maryland.
Universities and colleges--Massachusetts.
Universities and colleges--Washington (D.C.)

Places

Baltimore (Md.)--Politics and government.
Baltimore (Md.)--Social conditions.
Maryland--Politics and government--1865-1950.
Maryland--Social conditions.
United States--Politics and government--1865-1933.

Occupations

Cabinet officers.
Lawyers.
Reformers.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Charles J. Bonaparte, lawyer, municipal and civil service reformer, and U.S. attorney general and secretary of the navy, were given to the Library of Congress by Mrs. Bonaparte in 1923.

Processing History

The Bonaparte Papers were processed by Katharine Brand in 1958. The finding aid was revised in 2008.

Additional Guides

A brief note on these papers appeared in the *Annual Report* of the Librarian of Congress for fiscal 1923, p. 49. A further note indicating extent of the collection is in Curtis W. Garrison's *List of Manuscript Collections in the Library of Congress* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1932. 216 p.). In 1958, the Library published *Charles Joseph Bonaparte, A Register of His Papers in the Library of Congress* (reprinted 1971).

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Charles J. Bonaparte 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.

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1851, June 9	Born, Baltimore, Md.
1871	A.B., Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass.
1874	LL.B., Harvard Law School, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
1874	Admitted to bar and began law practice, Baltimore, Md.
1875	Married Ellen Channing Day
1902-04	Member, U.S. Board of Indian Commissioners
1904	Presidential elector from Maryland
1905-1906	Secretary of the navy
1906-1909	Attorney general
1917	Member, Advisory Board, Council of National Defense
1921, June 28	Died, Baltimore, Md.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Charles Joseph Bonaparte (1851-1921) span the years 1760 to 1921, with the bulk of the material from 1874-1921.

The collection contains incoming and outgoing correspondence, including from his service as secretary of the navy and attorney general. There are nearly matching groups of letters received and outgoing letters. The only appreciable gap appears in outgoing letters of general correspondence after 1916.

The [Subject File](#) and several correspondence series relate to Bonaparte's Progressive Party and Republican Party political activities, his cabinet posts under President Theodore Roosevelt, and his positions as member and chairman of council of the National Civil Service Reform League; overseer of Harvard University, 1891-1903; trustee of the Catholic University of America, 1904-1921; president of the Enoch Pratt Free Library; member of the Maryland Board of State Aid and Charities; president of the National Municipal League; and member of the executive committee of the National Civic Federation. A great deal of the material relates directly to Baltimore and Maryland civic, charitable, and political affairs.

Typed or printed copies of the bulk of Bonaparte's speeches and articles are contained in a [Speech, Article, and Book File](#). An index to the speeches indicates the great variety of subject matter included in his public addresses.

A [Scrapbooks](#) series derives from Bonaparte's cabinet posts, 1905-1909.

Significant correspondents in addition to Theodore Roosevelt include Louis Dembitz Brandeis, Champ Clark, Richard Henry Dana, Charles William Eliot, James Rudolph Garfield, Elbert H. Gary, James Gibbons, Henry Cabot Lodge (1850-1924), Carl Schurz, William H. Taft, Benjamin R. Tillman, Richard M. Venable, Owen Wister, and Clinton Rogers Woodruff.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in thirteen series:

- [Letters Received, General Correspondence, 1882-1919](#)
- [Letters Received, Financial and Office Correspondence, 1912-1921](#)
- [Letters Received: Secretary of the Navy, 1905-1906](#)
- [Letters Received: Attorney General, 1906-1909](#)

- Special Correspondence: Theodore Roosevelt, 1905-1917
- Outgoing Letters: General Correspondence, 1874-1921
- Outgoing Letters: Secretary of the Navy, 1905-1906
- Outgoing Letters: Attorney General, 1906-1909
- Personal Miscellany, circa 1880-1920
- Subject File, circa 1880-1920
- Speech, Article, and Book File, circa 1890-1920
- Legal Papers, 1760-1920
- Scrapbooks, 1905-1909

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-117	<p><u>Letters Received, General Correspondence, 1882-1919</u> Correspondence received relating to legal, political, and civic activities. Arranged chronologically by year and alphabetically therein by name of correspondents.</p>
BOX 118-121	<p><u>Letters Received, Financial and Office Correspondence, 1912-1921</u> Largely bills received and correspondence relating to real estate office activities. Arranged chronologically by year and therein alphabetically by name of correspondent.</p>
BOX 122-126	<p><u>Letters Received: Secretary of the Navy, 1905-1906</u> Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent. Letters received from the White House during this period are ins in Container 126.</p>
BOX 127-131	<p><u>Letters Received: Attorney General, 1906-1909</u> Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondence.</p>
BOX 132	<p><u>Special Correspondence: Theodore Roosevelt, 1905-1917</u> Mainly letters received. Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 133-173	<p><u>Outgoing Letters: General Correspondence, 1874-1921</u> Bound letterpress copy books. Arranged chronologically. Numerous gaps appear after November 1916. Some letterpress books overlap chronologically.</p>
BOX 174-181	<p><u>Outgoing Letters: Secretary of the Navy, 1905-1906</u> Bound letterpress copy books. Arranged chronologically. Letterpress copies of correspondence relating to telephone cost rates and Navy Department salaries and expenses are in Container 181.</p>
BOX 182-185	<p><u>Outgoing Letters: Attorney General, 1906-1909</u> Bound letterpress copy books. Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 186-187	<p><u>Personal Miscellany, circa 1880-1920</u> Biographical material, notes, memoranda, charity appeals, real estate office miscellany, clippings and other printed matter.</p>
BOX 188-210	<p><u>Subject File, circa 1880-1920</u> Memoranda, reports, clippings, printed matter, and correspondence. Arranged alphabetically by subject.</p>
BOX 211-218	<p><u>Speech, Article, and Book File, circa 1890-1920</u> Mainly typewritten or printed copies of speeches and articles. Also clipped and mounted portions of speeches and articles for unpublished book. Speeches are arranged in a numbered, indexed series, except for a small unindexed file arranged chronologically and three files grouped by subject. The index is in Container 211.</p>

BOX 219-256

Legal Papers, 1760-1920

Early family and personal legal papers, but mainly cases in which Bonaparte was counsel or litigant.

Arranged alphabetically as docketed. Also papers relating to estates held in trust and printed briefs.

BOX 257-262

Scrapbooks, 1905-1909

Clippings from newspapers and magazines mounted in scrapbooks. The material relates to Bonaparte's activities while in the cabinet of Theodore Roosevelt.

Arranged chronologically.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-117	Letters Received, General Correspondence, 1882-1919 Correspondence received relating to legal, political, and civic activities. Arranged chronologically by year and alphabetically therein by name of correspondents.
BOX 1	1882
BOX 2	1883
BOX 3	1884 A-L
BOX 4	M-Z
BOX 5	1885 A-J
BOX 6	K-Z
BOX 7	1886 A-J
BOX 8	K-Z
BOX 9	1887 A-K
BOX 10	L-Z
BOX 11	1888
BOX 12	1889 A-L
BOX 13	M-Z
BOX 14	1890 A-K
BOX 15	L-Z
BOX 16	1891 A-H
BOX 17	I-Q
BOX 18	R-Z
BOX 19	1892 A-D
BOX 20	E-K
BOX 21	L-Q
BOX 22	R-Z
BOX 23	1893 A-G
BOX 24	H-Q
BOX 25	R-Z
BOX 26	1894 A-D
BOX 27	E-L
BOX 28	M-R

Letters Received, General Correspondence, 1882-1919

Container	Contents
BOX 29	S-Z
BOX 30	1895 A-C
BOX 31	D-K
BOX 32	L-R
BOX 33	S-Z
BOX 34	1896 A-C
BOX 35	D-K
BOX 36	K-R
BOX 37	S-Z
BOX 38	1897 A-C
BOX 39	D-J
BOX 40	K-O
BOX 41	P-Z
BOX 42	1898 A-E
BOX 43	F-M
BOX 44	N-Z
BOX 45	1899 A-C
BOX 46	D-K
BOX 47	L-R
BOX 48	S-Z
BOX 49	1900 A-F
BOX 50	G-M
BOX 51	N-Z
BOX 52	1901 A-F
BOX 53	G-L
BOX 54	M-R
BOX 55	S-Z
BOX 56	1902 A-D
BOX 57	E-L
BOX 58	M-R
BOX 59	S-Z
BOX 60	1903 A-C
BOX 61	D-G
BOX 62	H-M
BOX 63	N-S
BOX 64	T-Z
BOX 65	1904

Letters Received, General Correspondence, 1882-1919

Container	Contents
-----------	----------

	A-C
BOX 66	D-G
BOX 67	H-Q
BOX 68	R-Z
BOX 69	1905
	A-D
BOX 70	E-J
BOX 71	K-R
BOX 72	S-Z
BOX 73	1906
	A-L
BOX 74	M-Z
BOX 75	1907
	A-F
BOX 76	G-P
BOX 77	R-Z
BOX 78	1908
BOX 79	1909
	A-G
BOX 80	H-R
BOX 81	S-Z
BOX 82	1910
	A-F
BOX 83	G-J
BOX 84	K-Q
BOX 85	R-V
BOX 86	W-Z
BOX 87	1911
	A-F
BOX 88	G-J
BOX 89	K-R
BOX 90	S-Z
BOX 91	1912
	A-D
BOX 92	E-G
BOX 93	H-Q
BOX 94	R-Z
BOX 95	1913
	A-D
BOX 96	E-L
BOX 97	M-R
BOX 98	S-Z
BOX 99	1914
	A-F
BOX 100	G-M
BOX 101	N-Z

Letters Received, General Correspondence, 1882-1919

Container	Contents
BOX 102	1915 A-F
BOX 103	G-L
BOX 104	M-R
BOX 105	S-Z
BOX 106	1916 A-D
BOX 107	E-L
BOX 108	M-R
BOX 109	S-Z
BOX 110	1917 A-G
BOX 111	H-Q
BOX 112	R-Z
BOX 113	1918 A-F
BOX 114	G-M
BOX 115	N-Z
BOX 116	1919 A-L
BOX 117	M-Z
BOX 118-121	Letters Received, Financial and Office Correspondence, 1912-1921 Largely bills received and correspondence relating to real estate office activities. Arranged chronologically by year and therein alphabetically by name of correspondent.
BOX 118	1912-1914
BOX 119	1919
BOX 120	1920
BOX 121	1921
BOX 122-126	Letters Received: Secretary of the Navy, 1905-1906 Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent. Letters received from the White House during this period are ins in Container 126.
BOX 122	A-C
BOX 123	D-G
BOX 124	L-Q
BOX 125	R-Z
BOX 126	From the White House
BOX 127-131	Letters Received: Attorney General, 1906-1909 Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondence.
BOX 127	A-C
BOX 128	D-G
BOX 129	H-L
BOX 130	M-R

Letters Received: Attorney General, 1906-1909

Container	Contents
BOX 131	S-Z
BOX 132	Special Correspondence: Theodore Roosevelt, 1905-1917 Mainly letters received. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 132	1905-1909, 1915-1917
BOX 133-173	Outgoing Letters: General Correspondence, 1874-1921 Bound letterpress copy books. Arranged chronologically. Numerous gaps appear after November 1916. Some letterpress books overlap chronologically.
BOX 133	18 Oct. 1874-18 Dec.
BOX 134	20 Dec. 1883-16 Aug. 1886
BOX 135	17 Aug. 1886-14 Mar. 1889
BOX 136	17 Feb. 1888-10 Jan. 1891
BOX 137	10 Jan. 1891-28 Jan. 1892
BOX 138	10 Jan.-13 July 1892
BOX 139	14 July 1892-17 Jan. 1893
BOX 140	18 Jan.-24 Oct. 1893
BOX 141	4 Oct. 1893-5 Mar. 1894
BOX 142	7 Mar.-9 July 1894
BOX 143	9 July-1 Dec. 1894
BOX 144	3 Dec. 1894-30 Mar. 1895
BOX 145	30 Mar.-26 July 1895
BOX 146	27 July-23 Dec. 1895
BOX 147	24 Dec. 1895-14 Apr. 1896
BOX 148	14 Apr.-9 Dec. 1896
BOX 149	9 Dec. 1896-23 July 1897
BOX 150	24 July 1897-24 Mar. 1898
BOX 151	24 Mar. 1898-25 Jan. 1899
BOX 152	25 Jan.-26 Dec. 1899
BOX 153	28 Dec. 1899-12 Oct. 1900
BOX 154	12 Oct. 1900-3 Apr. 1901
BOX 155	3 Apr.-5 Dec. 1901
BOX 156	5 Dec. 1901-22 May 1902
BOX 157	21 May 1902-16 mar. 1903
BOX 158	17 Mar. 1903-25 Jan. 1904
BOX 159	25 Jan.-13 July 1904
BOX 160	13 July 1904-10 Jan. 1905
BOX 161	10 Jan.-29 Mar. 1905
BOX 161A	29 Mar.-23 June 1905
BOX 162	23 June-27 Dec. 1905
BOX 162A	28 Dec. 1905-18 Aug. 1906
BOX 163	20 Aug. 1906-12 Mar. 1907
BOX 163A	13 Mar.-12 Nov. 1907

Outgoing Letters: General Correspondence, 1874-1921

Container	Contents
BOX 163B	13 Nov. 1907-6 June 1908
BOX 164	6 June 1908-11 Nov. 1909
BOX 165	11 Nov. 1909-4 Nov. 1910
BOX 166	4 Nov. 1910-21 Nov. 1911
BOX 167	21 Nov. 1911-19 Dec. 1912
BOX 168	19 Dec. 1912-10 Nov. 1913
BOX 169	10 Nov. 1913-31 Dec. 1914
BOX 170	31 Dec. 1914-27 Dec. 1915
BOX 171	27 Dec. 1915-4 Nov. 1916
BOX 172	23 Feb.-30 Oct. 1917
BOX 173	10 Nov. 1920-1 Oct. 1921
BOX 174-181	Outgoing Letters: Secretary of the Navy, 1905-1906 Bound letterpress copy books. Arranged chronologically. Letterpress copies of correspondence relating to telephone cost rates and Navy Department salaries and expenses are in Container 181.
BOX 174	26 June-6 Oct. 1905
BOX 175	6 Oct.-10 Dec. 1905
BOX 176	11 Dec. 1905-1 Feb. 1906
BOX 177	8 Feb.-24 Mar. 1906
BOX 178	24 Mar.-5 June 1906
BOX 179	5 June-24 Aug. 1906
BOX 180	24 Aug.-13 Nov. 1906
BOX 181	Telephone rate book, 16 July-4 Dec. 1906 Statement of Navy Department salaries and expenses, 1900-1904
BOX 182-185	Outgoing Letters: Attorney General, 1906-1909 Bound letterpress copy books. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 182	17 Dec. 1906-12 Apr. 1907
BOX 183	14 Apr. 1907-28 Feb. 1908
BOX 184	28 Feb.-7 Sept. 1908
BOX 185	7 Sept. 1908-5 Mar. 1909
BOX 186-187	Personal Miscellany, circa 1880-1920 Biographical material, notes, memoranda, charity appeals, real estate office miscellany, clippings and other printed matter.
BOX 186	Biographical material "Private" Notes, memoranda
BOX 187	Charity appeals Real estate

Personal Miscellany, circa 1880-1920

Container	Contents
	Printed matter
BOX 188-210	Subject File, circa 1880-1920 Memoranda, reports, clippings, printed matter, and correspondence. Arranged alphabetically by subject.
BOX 188	Baltimore Bar Association Baltimore Reform League, Baltimore, Md. Bar Association of America of Maryland Belgian Red Cross Burnt District Commission Catholic Club
BOX 189	Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.
BOX 190	Charity Organization Society Children's Aid Society Civic Federation
BOX 191-193	Civil Service Reform League, 1902-1917
BOX 194	Consumers' League Contested elections, 1909
BOX 195	Election campaigns, 1895, 1904, 1911
BOX 196	Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Md. Federated Charities Good Government Club
BOX 197	Harvard University, Cambridge, Md., special reports, printed matter
BOX 198	Harvard, printed matter
BOX 199	Income and expenses Indian investigation, 1903 Indians, 1912-17
BOX 200	Justice Department Mission helpers
BOX 201	National Conservation Association National Municipal League
BOX 202	Navy Department Navy Yard reports
BOX 203	Phi Beta Kappa Politics, 1905-1912, 1916
BOX 204	Postal investigation, 1903 Indexed items
BOX 205	Indexed items, clippings
BOX 206	Progressive Party 1912-1917
BOX 207	1912-1917
BOX 208	St. Elizabeth's Home, Washington, D.C. St. Joseph's Apostolic Society Sewerage Commission Short ballot Society for Prevention of Blindness

Subject File, circa 1880-1920

Container	Contents
BOX 209	Society for Suppression of Vice State aid and charities Trinity College, Washington, D.C. Union for the Public Good University of Maryland, College Park, Md.
BOX 210	War preparedness
BOX 211-218	Speech, Article, and Book File, circa 1890-1920 Mainly typewritten or printed copies of speeches and articles. Also clipped and mounted portions of speeches and articles for unpublished book. Speeches are arranged in a numbered, indexed series, except for a small unindexed file arranged chronologically and three files grouped by subject. The index is in Container 211.
BOX 211	Speeches Nos. 1-50, index
BOX 212	Nos. 51-125
BOX 213	Nos. 126-200
BOX 214	Nos. 201-254
BOX OV 215	Nos. 255-280 Unindexed, 1915-1920 Navy, 1905-1906 Maryland campaign, 1906-1907
BOX OV 216	Civil Service, 1906-1908 Book manuscript of collected speeches
BOX 217	Articles 1911-1912
BOX 218	1913-May 1915 On Theodore Roosevelt, 1919
BOX 219-256	Legal Papers, 1760-1920 Early family and personal legal papers, but mainly cases in which Bonaparte was counsel or litigant. Arranged alphabetically as docketed. Also papers relating to estates held in trust and printed briefs.
BOX 219	Family and Personal Deeds, leases, and cases 1760-1839
BOX 220	1840-1901
BOX 221	Cases A
BOX 222	A-B
BOX 223-224	B
BOX 225	B-C
BOX 226	C
BOX 227	D
BOX 228	D-F

Legal Papers, 1760-1920

Container	Contents
BOX 229	F-G
BOX 230	G
BOX 231-232	H
BOX 233	H-I
BOX 234	J-L
BOX 235	L-M
BOX 236-237	M
BOX 238	M-O
BOX 239-240	O
BOX 241	P
BOX 242	P-R
BOX 243	R
BOX 244	R-S
BOX 245	Smith, M. A.
BOX 246	S
BOX 247	T-U
BOX 248	V-W
BOX 249	W-Z, miscellaneous
BOX 250	Other legal material Cole estate
BOX 251	Hoffman, Hyatt, Piper estates
BOX 252	Miscellaneous wills, deeds St. Mary's Industrial School, Baltimore, Md., commitment papers
BOX 253	Miscellaneous notes
BOX 254-256	Printed briefs
BOX 257-262	Scrapbooks, 1905-1909 Clippings from newspapers and magazines mounted in scrapbooks. The material relates to Bonaparte's activities while in the cabinet of Theodore Roosevelt. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 257	Vols. 1-4, 1905
BOX 258	Vols. 5-7, 1905-1906
BOX 259	Vols. 8-10, 1906-1907
BOX 260	Vols. 11-13, 1907-1908
BOX 261	Vols. 14-15, 1908
BOX 262	Vols. 16-17, 1908-1909